PATHWAY TO GOD

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& RELIGION, BELGAUM

PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

"ONE GOD, ONE WORLD, ONE HUMANITY"

Vol. XXVII January 1993 No. 2

The Sacred Verses

ईश्वरः सर्वनिर्माता नेहान्य इति निश्चयी ।
अन्तर्गलितसर्वाशः शान्तः क्वापि नसज्जते ॥

He who has known for certain that Isvara is the creator of all and that there is none else here, becomes peaceful with all his inner desires set at rest, and is not attached to anything whatsoever.

Astavakra Samhita XI 2

आत्मानमद्वयं कश्चिज्जानाति जगदीश्वरम् ।
यद्वेत्ति तत् स कुरुते नभयं तस्य कुत्रचित् ॥

Rare is the man who knows the self as one without a second and as lord of the universe. He does what he considers worth doing and has no fear from any quarter.

Astavakra Samhita IV, 5

जन्मनां कर्मणां वापि चित्तं बीजमुदाहृतम् ।
पादपः पवनेनेव देहश्चित्तेन चाल्यते ॥

The mind is the seed (cause) of birth and action. Just as a tree is shaken by the wind, so also the body is activated by the mind.

Verse 358, ninth discourse in the Nirvana Prakarana of Yoga Vasista.

The Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion, Belgaum.

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PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

"ONE GOD, ONE WORLD, ONE HUMANITY"

Editor : Prof. T. F. Bidari

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EDITORIAL

NOT PASSION, BUT COMPASSION

O Lord lead me to the noble land of Compassion ! O Lord Rāma, lead me to the goal of Compassion !

By Lord's mercy and blessing let me eschew passions and develop compassion to one and all !

Not passion, but compassion is the key-word of modern day social and moral life. Passion is animality and compassion is divinity. Let man rise to the noble heights of saintly Compassion on all children of God, irrespectiva of Caste, Community and Religion ! By the guiding forces of divinity which is rooted deep inside the heart petals of man, and by the wisdom of intellect which is guided by Gurudeo, Sastras and scriptures, let man rise from darkness to light of inner self. God is Light; and shines in the Heart-Lotus of pious people of purity and piety. There are many noble thoughts which the most exhalted sage Vāsista showered on Lord Shree Rāma, to make him the lustrous God. But in modern times, we have forgotten Heart-temple, and are only concentrating on Ayodhyā, for rousing our passions and emotions. Temple will be there in sacred place-Ayodhvā. No one is opposed to the religious concept of construction of a temple. Nor even Muslims are opposed to the religiosity of Hindus. But the after-math

of Ayodhyā incident has led to series of sinful acts of shamefulness. Alas the passions over-ruling the humanist nature of every man in society ! Alas the loss of Dharma, the loss of self in a frenzy ! But beware the snare of animality : Beware the burning fire of evil nature ! If we are conscious of ourselves, and are moved by the wisdom of this golden land, we will again be back on the highroad of happiness. There is a full fountain of Philosophy and 'Darshan' in the scriptures; and the land of sages, Gurus and Mahatmās is always inundated by the milky flow of Mother's Grace and Mercy. Be a pure and selfless man of no desires and designs. Be a calm and quiet person with introspective mind. Sleep well in the diamond temple of compassion and peace. This is the quintessence of all teachings of pure Religion and Pure Darshana Sastras.

It is most unfortunate in a secular state that communal violence has erupted. and has caused damage to social life, and also to the cultural edifice of peace and harmony Hindus for generations are famous for the spirit of tolerance and love of enlightenment. It is very difficult for the Hindus & Muslims alike to control emotions and passions, once they are roused on a vast scale-almost on national level. No one is responsible for such a ghastly and ghostly action of the surging crowd of two lakhs of impassioned youths. We need not point our finger either at the Sadhus who assembled there in large numbers, nor at the political and devilish forces, for there is some lacuna, a defect in our religious consciousness. God is free, Shree Rama is untouched by foolhardy nature of fanatics. In my

depth of inner self, in my inner fabrics of mentality there are the vibrations of enemity, passion and greed. In my inner self, I am not a man, for I am swayed sway by the animal forces of hatred aggression and pugnacity But alas, I am also a conscentious, prudent thinker with judgement of truest morality ! This in short is the paradox of man's mentality. As a divine being and as a truest devotee of truth, I have now to lead a real life of noble religiosity.

Let us now introspect deep into our heart, and note that all talk of Philosophy and Darshan is in vain, for there is temple destruction-Shree Rama isn't seated in the heart within. we are the ' Atma Hano Janāhā' - the destroyers of Heart Temple within. The greatest catastrophe from the higher point of Indian Spiritualism is the temple destruction of Heart, by all men here or elsewhere. There isn't the crisis of reason, nor the conflagration in society, for all suffer from heartless, merciless cruelty of demolishing the divine structure of real Hinduism. The strength of compassion, the sharpness of intuitive insight of wise men, and the greatness of Tapas of Mahatmā must be experienced by the yogic persons of this Holy Land-Bhārat. Never can true religion be destroyed; and never can gods be dethroned from the sovereignty of ' Samrājyā ' - the Swarajya. May all men of mirth live forever in the empire of Enlightened Compassion !

Men sit and watch the upheavals in society, forgetting the sad story of spiritualism. The only solution to the dreaded problem of lower meaning of religion, is to rise above the egoistic

feelings to the very truth of Light within- 'Ātma prakāsha.' words of religion and scripture are lost in the wilderness of worldliness and wickedness. The devils of sensuous pleasure haunt us always; and the talk of Religion to an epicurean is merely a 'pandora's box'. Religion in its pure sense, either in India or in Buddhist and Islamic countries is the commpassionate life of rich heart. The heart when filled with the nectar of compassion to all living beings and animals, is the abode of Lord Krishna !

O Raghava, that in which beings vibrate. that which creates them, know that Self to be your self " verse 1 worshjp of the self (8)

O Raghava adopt a comprehensive view characterised by the abandonment of all objects of contemplation, live in your innate self, even while alive and thus play your part in the world 2 (7) CH. Method of Purification.

When this assemblage of body, senses etc. acts of its own accord there arises an idea 'I am this'. This is the Jiva (ego) stained by the dirt of ignorance. When the conviction that everything is the space-like (i e. all pervasive) consciousness becomes firm, the Jiva comes to an end like a lamp without oil. 'Exposition of the self'- Ch (9) verse 1.

—Verses from 'Yoga Vasista Sāra.'

Words of Wisdom

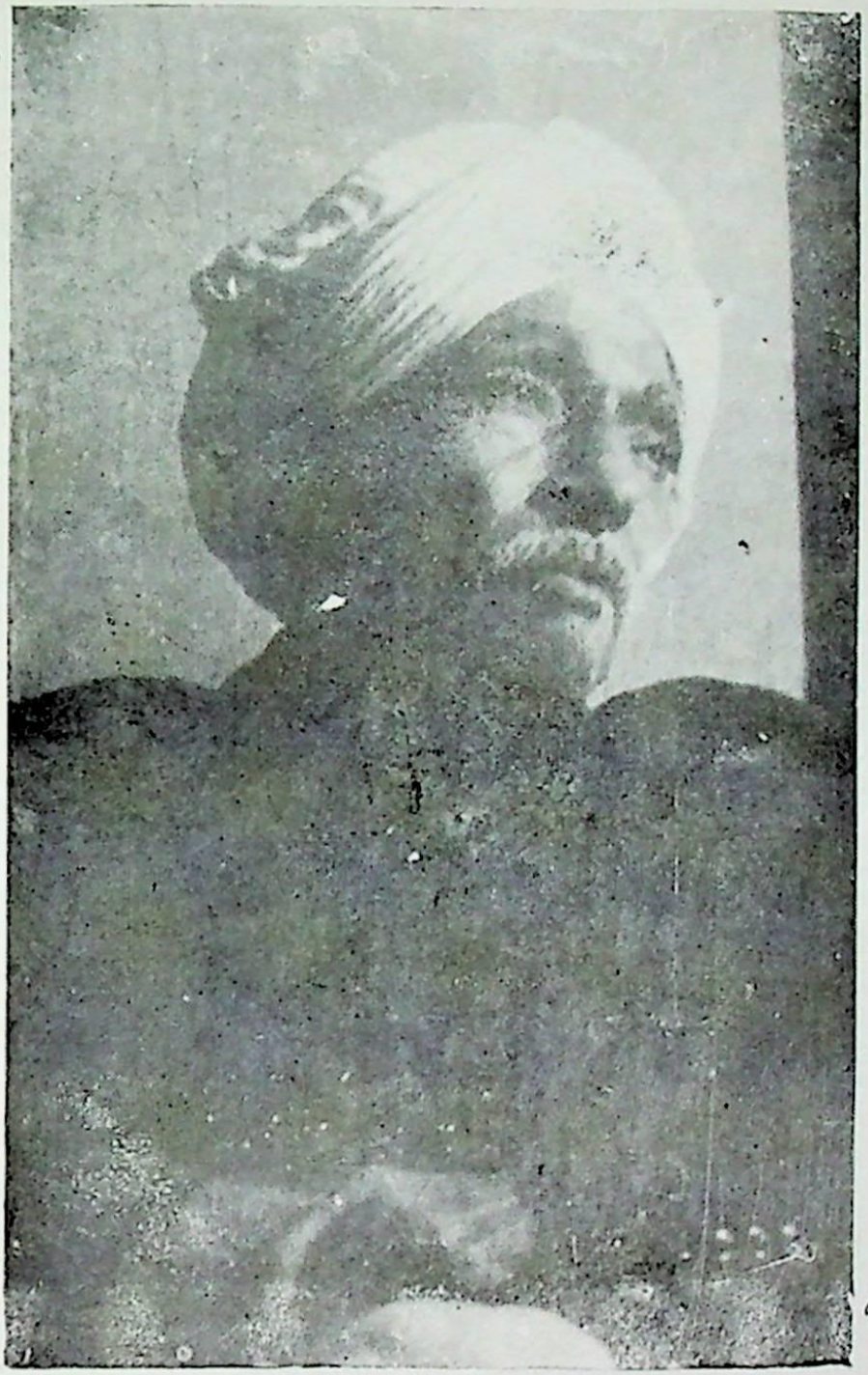
0 How wonderful! In me, the shoreless ocean, the waves of individual selves, according to their nature, rise strike each other, play for a time, and disappear. (Chapter II, verse 25 'Astavakra Sambita')

0 The self which is absolute, effortless, immutable and spotless, is neither far away nor limited. It is verity ever attained. (Ch 18 verse 5. Ibid)

0 One who acts in conformity with such thoughts as this is done by the body and not by me, the pure self-Such a one, even though acting does not act. (Ch 18 verse 25. Ibid)

0 He whose undertakings are all free from desire and thoughts of the world, and whose actions are burnt up by the fire of wisdom, him even the wise call a sage. (Ch IV verse 19 Bhagwadgita)

0 The mind being established in the self at sacred spot, the Heart, is the best of action, bhakti, yoga and jnana. This is certain. (verse 10 Upadeshasara, Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.)



Born :
Jamkhandi
3-7-1886

Samadhi :
Nimbal
6-6-1957

THE FIVE SENSES

(II PART)

[In the last issue of 'Pathway to God', we read about the function of pituitary gland in the heart of Embryonic Brain Region. Now in this second and concluding part, we read the views of Physicists-Sir Jeans and Mr. Eddington, and mental aspect of Sensation. In Conclusion we read an amazing view-the solution to the much-vexed problem of Indian Philosophy: 'Is there an objective world?' —Ed]

The significance then of Quantum Mechanics for the workings of the brain is obvious. If a brain scientist examines the workings of a certain neuroreceptor he will collapse a wave function in which case he will see an actual particle passing through a hole or through one of a number of holes in the membrane. And it is precisely the brain scientist's action in observing the process that causes the particle to select which hole it will pass through. But if no brain scientist is examining the workings of that neuroreceptor then the effect is identical to brain waves having caused the neurone to fire. And what's more, as soon as the brain scientist stops looking at the particle, it immediately reverts to the wave function containing a new array of potential particles. Nothing is real unless we look at it, and it ceases to be real as soon as we stop looking. (P. 173) [8]

which raises the question of how we obtain knowledge of atomic processes through the senses. "Whatever quantity we say we are "observing", the actual procedure nearly always ends in reading the position of some kind of indicator on a graduated scale or its equivalent." (P. 99) [9] It is fundamental to Quantum theory that all that is real is the results of experiments. The ions in brain science are true particles within the meaning of atomic physics and can not be seen in any normal sense of the word. The most sophisticated atomic recording devices are used to determine

whether an ion did in fact pass through a hole. And the membranes of the neuroreceptors are themselves practically of atomic dimensions and can only be pictured in an electron micrograph. It is these pictures that are all that is real. As Sir Arthur Eddington says, " Observable is a very elusive conception, and if we pursue the criticism to the end, we shall have to doubt a lot of things that we do not in the least want to doubt. " (p. 54) [9]

Potentially tens of thonsands of holes can open through which ions pass to cause the single firing of one nerve cell, or so the instruments tell us. Yet the whole thrust of Quantum Mechanics is that to count the number of holes that open up in the membrane and record the ions that pass through it is erroneous. The wave function on the other side of the membrane, if no instrument records the event. is more complex mathematically speaking than the sum total of interference of the actual particles that passed through it when an instrument records them. Brain scientists however, although they are working with atomic processes, are not taking the findings of Quantum theory into account. They attach no special significance to the mathematically more complex wave function after the " particles " have passed through the holes when they are not on hand to observe.

It is misleading then to explain brain science in terms of chemical neurotransmitters and particles because they only become "real" when the wave function collapses. Better to look upon electrical waves stimulating the senses. This is also suggested by the sheer number of neurohormone, neurotransmitters, neuromodulators and neuropeptides that have now been found. In Quantum Mechanics more than 200 particles have been identified, which caused Dirac to remark, "People are only too willing to postulate a new particle on the slightest evidence, either theoretical or hypothetical." (p. 127) [8] Sir Arthur Eddington was even more sceptical, "....an illustration may show that a serious practical question is raised. Just now

nuclear physicists are writing a great deal about hypothetical particles called neutrinos... I am not much impressed by the neutrino theory. In an ordinary way I might say that I do not believe in neutrinos. But I have to reflect that a physicist may be an artist, and you never know where you are with artists. My old-fashioned kind of disbelief in neutrinos is scarcely enough. Dare I say that experimental physicists will not have sufficient ingenuity to make neutrinos ?" (p. 112) [9] Since then – 1939 – neutrinos have been "discovered."

In the same vein there are more than fifty recognized neurotransmitters which does not take into account sub-groups within that fifty, to say nothing of the neuropeptide " explosion ". Peptides are made of amino acids joined together to make a chain, and since eighteen different amino acids are found in animals there are 306 ways of putting these together to make a dipeptide and, theoretically, there is an astronomical number of different decapeptides (with ten amino acids). (p. 543) [3] They all create potential " particles " to be observed by brain scientists upon the collapse of a wave function. A leading neurobiologist (artist, according to Eddington) talks of neurotransmitters as " a chorus of information, voices, each adding tonal colour or timbre to the final output of the brain and nervous system. " (p. 560) [3] But the fact that there are so many also suggests that they are being thrown up to create an illusion, and when not being observed they are simply electrical waves emanating from the embryo brain region–the heart of the brain where the Self is located. [10]

Heisenberg's "uncertainty principle" would also appear to indicate the futility for brain scientists of observing particles. According to this principle we can never know all that there is to be known about a particle. If we know exactly its position then we can't know its velocity. Alternatively, if we know precisely its velocity we can't know exactly where it is. It can not be disputed that the

precise position of particles in the membrane of neuroreceptors and the actual velocity of the passage of particles through the holes in membranes will have effects on the excitation or inhibition of the neurones. Schrodinger specifically says, "All chemical transformations, the velocity of chemical reactions... everything in fact.... is governed by laws of this kind... "(p. 66) [13] Yet brain scientists go on identifying more and more neurotransmitters and observe the particles pass through the holes, without concerning themselves that the bewildering array of neurotransmitters already identified" .. remains subject to the uncertainty relation, of which the only tolerable image is the guiding wave group." (p. 220)]13]

The exquisitely subtle element in Schrodinger's wave mechanics is the concept of " probability ". If we make an observation of a quantum system and get an answer A to our measurement, then the quantum equations tell us what the probability is of getting answer B (or C, or D, or whatever) if we make the same observation a certain time later. (p. 123) [8] Sir James Jeans insists that these probability waves do not exist, but a merely waves of knowledge. Indeed, the only positive thing we know about them is that they have an irreversible relation to observation, (p. 94) [9] We have already learned that Quantum theory on observation is all about converting atomic processes into a life-size object that the scientist can actually see, the measuring instrument. This measurement at the macroscopic level becomes the only reality, in other words the wave of probabilities collapses to produce this one item of observational knowledge. But its options remain open for the future. Here again, an insoluble problem for brain scientists trying to find out through their own senses how the sensory receptors work at quantum level. Or at least it would be a problem, were they even to become aware of it !

The probability waves then are actually waves of Consciousness in the brain of the observing scientist that caused

him to see, hear, touch etc his measuring instrument. Through these waves the total illusion is effected; Conscious scientist, illusory measuring instrument, fictitious quantity measured, even the probability of obtaining a like measurement in the future and the denial of any underlying "reality". Waves of consciousness also satisfy all the stipulated conditions for probability waves. For a start, they are waves packets with precise frequencies, vibrations, intensities etc. Secondly, they have an irreversible relation to observation for, by their very nature, it remains undetermined what observational knowledge they will produce in the future. And, finally, they conform to Sir James Jeans description as waves of knowledge that do not exist in exterrnal space. They are emitted from the embryonic substratum of the scientist's own brain. In the words of Mandukya Karika, " .. it is the vibration of Consciousness that appears to be the knower and the known. " (IV. 47) [5]

Waves of consciousness of course are responsible for all sensory input, and not just for scientists obtaining knowledge of atomic processes through the senses. Recordings have been made from the exposed brains of fully conscious human subjects of the reticular activating system, that dense network of cells that arises in the embryo brain region and spreads upwards and outwards to infiltrate the cortex. Originally the subject was touched and could feel nothing. When the touch to the skin was intensified the recorded waveform became more complex and the subject reported, " I can feel something. " According to a leading neurophysiologist, " It seems reasonable to assume that the additions to the waveform reflected those contributions from the reticular system upon which consciousness depends. " (p, 753) [3] And so we have direct evidence of the co-relation of changing wave functions from the embryo brain region and what externel stimuli becomes conscious to us. " Out of the totality of the rhythm he created the organs of the sense organs. " (Paingale Upanishad (I. 10) [6]

Even if all the foregoing is not enough to convince that electrical waves are "probably" responsible for activating

the five senses, there are also the findings of Quantum Mechanics concerning "subject" and "object". We (as subject) have the impression that we can see an object external to us. We may also have the impression that object, or tasting that object, or smelling or hearing that object. The Upanishads, of course, are quite clear that this is an illusion. "On account of false notions the Supreme Being is perceived as manifold, for to him are yoked ten organs, nay hundreds of them. He indeed is the organs! He indeed is tens and thousands, numerous and countless." (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 2. 5. 19) [2]. If however Quantum Mechanics were to establish that there can be a "subject" and an "object" then evidently the Upanishads would be wrong. The "false notion" would be do deny "duality" as the Upanishads do.

But this is where Quantum Mechanics so convincingly supports the Upanishads. In the words of Schrodinger, "that mysterious boundary between the "subject" and the "object" has broken down". (p. 50) [11] "It is said there is also an unavoidable and uncontrollable impression from the side of the subject onto the object." (p. 53) [11] Brain science, however, is out of step with both the Upanishads and Quantum Mechanics. Brain scientists don't realize that they can never determine how an external stimuli (object) activates a particular sensory receptor (subject). There is no physical boundary between the two. And what of this unavoidable and uncontrollable impression from the side of the sensory receptor onto the external stimuli? An unavoidable and uncontrollable impression from the side of the nose onto the odour! "Then what should one smell and through what?" (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 2. 4 14) [2]

Or another example, say, the action of a light on the retina of the eye of an experimental animal. The light would be the object and the animal would be the subject. A brain scientist cannot determine how the one acts upon the other for the light and the retina of the animal are

one. And there is an even more complex problem. Now the brain scientist becomes the subject and the light and the retina of the animal is the object. There is no Physical boundary between him and the light/retina object. Not only is he one with what he is observing but there is an unavoidable and uncontrollable impression from him onto what he is observing. To again quote Schrodinger : " We are to understand that we never observe an object without it being modified or tinged by our own activity in observing it. " (p. 50) [11] For a brain scientist to tell us how the light acted upon the retina after he " modified " or " tinged " what he was observing, is to tell us nothing.

The core of the problem is that modern physics has been unable to establish, as a matter of pure mathematics, that an external world exists. If this could be done then there would be some objective standard by which the reaction of external stimuli on sensory receptors could be gauged. If it could be proved that the light in the above example really existed in time and space external to the experimental animal, and we knew the mathematical constituents of that light alone, then theoretically it would be possible to determine how that light acts upon the retina of the animal. In theory it would be possible for a physicist to determine this without observing the experiment and therefore modifying it. But not only can't it be proved mathematically that the light exists external to the animal, on the contrary modern physics tells us that the light is not external to the animal. That mysterious boundary between subject and object has broken down. Without a boundary, talk of external stimuli becomes irrational and meaningless. Hence the statement in the Taittiriya Upanishad, " He that is here in the human person, and he that is there in the sun, are one." (II. viii. 5) [12]

Also, in the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, " when there is duality, as it were, then....one sees another, and hears another .....one knows another. " (2. 4. 14) [2] This raises the well known problem of " other minds ". It is one

thing to say that the whole universe is programmed into my own brain, but how do I explain the apparent fact that other people, and animals as well, are exhibiting thought processes similar to my own and yet these thought processes are not taking place in my brain. The answer is the Self. " There is no other seer than He, there is no other knower than He. He is the Inner Controller your own Self and immortal." (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 3. 7. 23) [2]. The Self is in the embryo brain region of each and every sentient being. There is no other seer than He in that He causes all sentient beings to see and smell, and taste etc. There is no other thinker than He in that He causes all sentient beings to think. The embryo brain region of all sentient beings is a microcosm in a macrocosmic intelligence link-up (Brahman).

This is the only way to explain the astounding finding of Quantum Mechanics that there is no boundary between subject and object. Duality, the apparent existence of other minds must be an illusion. We have to look to one entity that embraces everything — a macrocosmic mind. Sir Arthur Eddington specifically says the " statement that the universe is of the nature of a thought or sensation in a universal Mind is true in the sense that it is the logical consequence of " Quantum theory." (p. 151) [9] We must picture then a non-physical observing universal "Subject"-Brahman. There is no other knower than He. Through waves of consciousness He operates the five senses in all of us, and creates illusory objects. The Kena Upanishnd could not be more definite on the point – " That which man does not see with the eyes, that by which man perceives the activities of the eye, know that alone to be Brahman and not what people worship as an object. That which man does not hear with the ear, that by which man knows this ear, know that to be Brahman and not this that people worship as an object. That which man does not smell with the organ of smell, that by which the organ of smell is impelled, know that to be Brahman and not what people worship as an object." (I. 7-9) [12]

[9] The Philosophy of Physical Science by Sir Arthur Eddington; Cambridge; 1939.

[10] Inner Self Located by B. Y. Bartholomew; Vedic Light; New Delhi; July, 1990

[11] Science and Humanism by Erwin Schrodinger Cambridge University Press; 1952.

[12] Eight Upanishads, Vol. 1; Advaita Ashrama Calcutta; 1986.

[13] Science Theory and Man by Erwin Schrodinger; George Allen & Unwin, London; 1935.

—Bradley York Bartholomew

THE LAND OF PEACE

In this land of peace, there appeared so many conflagrations in the past. In modern conditions, there have been many blasphemous trends in this land of Dharma. But truth remains firm in heart-temple. Śri Ramana Maharshi in Jnana Yoga, Sri Paramahansa in Kali worship, Sri Aurobindo in Integral Yoga, and Shri Gopinath Kaviraj in Akhanda Mahāyoga, have introduced new reorientation in Philosophy and 'Darshana'. The secret and Sacred 'Ganga' of wisdom which hither to flowed sceretly as undercurrent of Indian Darshana Shastra, is now openly flowing within the reach of every Sincere-minded Sādhaka, here or abroad A new era of Darshana, Vision and enlightenment is started with benevolent efforts of Jnānis and Mahāyogis who are the Grace of self. The great intuition of Sri Aurobindo, supported by Sri Gopinath Kaviraj is the matter of modern evolution. Supramental awareness has entered earth-atmosphere three decades before So the silver lining of all dark clouds of Indian social scene is the gracious presence of Guru in all respects in modern days. Let us forget the encircling gloom and darkness of weak mind; and let us prepare for the new light and delight of enlightenment in peaceful land Peace is not the obverse of life and activity. Nor is peace a relative term. For a wise man of Philosophy peace is inner happiness in heart-centres. In India peace is an Experience !

T. F. Bidari

The Historico-religious Evolution of the Concept of Guru

(Part II)

Being a person of might, the guru could, if he desired, uplift the disciple to the same spiritual authority which he himself enjoyed. It was, however, the cherished desire of the student to gain the similar spiritual status, through *Mystica participio,* which his teacher had gained. The mystical participation resulted in the loss of identity of the student. It meant that the identity of the student was to be found in his teacher (see for further details *SB* ,xi.3.3. 1–7). The student, by being totally subservient to his teacher, was able to " redeem that part of his (being) which has at the moment of entering on studentship gone into the teacher " (*ibid* , xi. 3. 3. 6). The part that has gone into the teacher at the time of initiation is being returned unto the student when it has been cleansed by the teacher. It is this mystical or sacramental cleansing of the student that enables him to participate mystically in the being of his teacher. The student, through the mystical participation in the being of his teacher, reaches the summit of spiritual experience whereby luminous revelation of Reality is actualised. The teacher, being the embodiment as well as the carrier of divinity, is, as it were, the ultimate and final gateway to the Divine. Thus the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (vi. 23) considers a teacher to be God himself. It is this conviction in the divinity of the guru that asks the disciple to consider each word and action of his teacher as a divine command. The very term *guru* – as the dispeller of darkness denotes the function and role, power and authority, of the teacher.[11] The divine power of the guru is thought to be so heavy and unbearable that even the earth is incapable of enduring it. The divine power and might of the guru is heavy and unbearable because in him is to

be found the power of the *word* (*mantra*). That comes to pass or be that which he utters. The word of the teacher is *mantra* itself (cf *Rigvada*, i. 147. 4: (*mantro guruh punar astu so asmai*). The words we utter and speak, the thoughts we think, the concepts we conceive,–all of them are incapable in unlocking the mystery of the Transcendent. Our empirical mode of thought and speech itself is the product of surface thinking. The words of the guru, however, stem from the depth or descend from the above. As their source is said to be non–human or pure consciousness, they are, therefore, considered to be mantric in character. That which is mantric is of the nature of revelation. The mantric words of guru are, therefore, believed to be of pure essence, and as such reveal Reality that remains hidden or concealed to our intentional consciousness. Therefore the belief that mantric words of the guru alone have the capacity of removing the veils of empirical as well as of spiritual ignorance. It is this revelatory character of the guru's word that has bestowed divine authority upon him.

The role of the guru, however, has not only to be confined to his spiritual functions. The role is vast and complex. Each and every aspect of life, whether spiritual or secular, is permeated by the presence of the guru. Even in his secular functions, the authority of the guru does not merely stem from his expertise or proficiency; rather it comes from the spiritual nature of his office. Whether it be father, mother or elder or other, all them have to be accorded the respect of a teacher, for each one of them, in one way or the other, function as a teacher. As the subject-matter of knowledge is vast and complex, so the role of the teacher too became widened. It became impossible for a single teacher to teach every subject under the sun. It became necessary to have different teachers for different aspects of life and knowledge. But each teacher had to be shown equal measure of respect. The student, therefore, is asked "..ever to offend the teacher who initiated him, nor him who explained the Veda, nor his father or mother, nor (any other) guru...." (*Manusmriti, iv. 162*) *ācāryamca prava-*

ktāraṁ pitaraṁ mītraṁ gurum na hiṁsyī'.....). Among the teachers, five are said to deserve special attention and respect, namely, father, mother, spiritual teacher, elder brother and (in the case of woman) husband. The role and function of the guru is so wide that no aspect of life escapes his supervision.

Although there are various teachers for different activities of life, most important and significant among the teachers is the one from whom the student gathers *(ācinoti)* the knowledge of *dharma* and of *ācara* (moral conduct) (See *Āps. Dhs,.* i. 1. 1. 14). The teacher of *dharma* and *ācāra* has to be respected and honoured precisely because it is from hi n from whom the mysteries of life are unveiled. We may learn secular knowledge from other teachers, but it is useful only to the extent we are in the world. The knowledge of *dharma*, on the contrary, makes us to cross, in the boat of *ācarā*, the ocean of life. This knowledge, therefore, is considered to be imperishable and everlasting. It is the teacher of *dharma* who points out the ultimate metaphysical goal of life. It is on the foundation of virtuous conduct *(ācāra)* on which the edifice of existence can be built firmly. In the *Nirukta (i.4)* the tecaher of *dharma* is said to be the real and actual guru, for it is from him from whom the virtues of life *(ācāram grāhayati)* are grasped and learnt. Before being initiated in the study of the Vedas, the student has to make himself fit and worthy. The worthiness of a student depends to what extent he has become moral and virtuous in life.

It was not only the knowledge that was valued highly; rather the very process of instruction had its own mystical significance. The first and the most inportant initiatory sacrament *(saṁskāra)* was that of instruction.[12] If the *(saṁskāra)* of instruction was correctly performed, the foundation of the student's studentship was seen to be right. This sacrament conferred upon the student "the superior birth from knowledge *(vidyā)*" *(Āps. Dhs.* i. 1. 1. 16–18). By following the correct procedures concerning instruction, the student gained divine powers, and thereby

he was able to transcend the conditioned mode of existence. The very purpose of knowledge was seen in the knowledge of the Beyond, and the knowledge of the Beyond was seen to be identical with the non-natural powers that enabled man to transcend the natural realm. Thus the acquirement of knowledge was identified with the supernatural powers as early as the Vedic times.

The subject matter of study was not simply confined to the textual study of the Vedas. Initially a student was made to study the Vedas and the six ancilliary sciences. Having gained the basic knowledge of the Vedas, the student could learn any branch of secular subject, so that the livelihood of life could be earned. As far as the learning of the esoteric knowledge was concerned, it could be imparted only to the student who was a real seeker, that is, who desired to realise the unconditioned existence. The teacher, after testing the worth of the student, would impart secretly the secret knowledge concerning Reality. "For him who knows this mystic doctrine of *brahman (brahmopaniṣadam)*, the sun neither rises nor sets... A father may teach this (doctrine of) *brahman* to his son or to a worthy pupil" *(Chānd. Up.*, iii. 11. 5).

As, with the passage of time, the tasks of the teacher became complex and vast, so his roles were greatly expanded. It was an impossible task for the person to fulfill all the roles. As a consquence of this complexity of tasks, there were teachers who taught the students the mystical doctrine of *brahman*, whereas other teachers imparted instruction in the Vedic texts. Again some other teachers gave instructions in sacrificial techniques and methods. There were also priests who performed the sacrificial rituals for there clients. It is due to the various tasks that the office of a *purohita* (that is, a family priest) came into being. The purohita assumed a role that was next to God. The institution of purohita came into being when the royal or rich families appointed priest – teachers in their courts or families. The dependence of royalty upon the purohita (chaplain) can be

seen from the fact that the king could perform no activity without the council and permission of his priest - teacher. The purohita functioned in the royal court as a shield and defence against the evil forces. He, as it were, was seen as the protector of the king's realm. In the *Rigveda* (iv.50 7-9) the purohita is seen as a counterpart as well as a representative of god Bṛhaspati. The king could gain power and prosperity only through the favour and intervention of his purohita. The divine powers of purohita could bring about fertility in the land, could allow the clouds to pour down rain upon the dry earth, could bring victory to the king in a battle, and so on. We are, therefore, told that " that king, indeed, overpowers all opposing forces with his valour and heroic power who maintains Bṛhaspati (i. e., the purohita) well attended, and honours and praises him as the one who deserves the first share (precedence). He verily abides well established in his own place; to him Ila (Nourishment) abounds for ever; to that king his subjects bow of their own accord, with whom the brāhman priest takes precedence. Irresistable, he wins the riches of his enemies and kinsmen; the king who affords comfort to the brāhman desiring help, him the gods help " (*Rigveda)*, iv. 50. 7-9).

Numerous are legends that tell us about the divine character of a purohita. A typical purohita is to be found in the person of Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha is said to be the mind-born son of Mitra and Varuṇa *(Rigveda*, vii. 60. 12; vii. 33. 11). His powers are enormous and of wide range. Vasiṣṭha's divinity is of such a quality that he can protect his clients merely by offering prayers and sacrifices to the gods *(ibid.*, vii. 18. 4; vii. 70. 6).[18] He possessed such abilities that he could obtain easily favours, for the good of his patron, from the heavenly deities by composing the hymns of praise and by invoking them *(ibid*, vii. 88. 1; vii. 26. 25). Another archetypical purohita is represented in the person of Viśvāmitra. The supernatural powers of Viśvāmitra are said to be such that the two rivers, when commanded, lowered their water level so that the king and his armies could cross them *(ibid*, iii. 33). It was not only teaching and imparting of knowledge that characterised the

function of a purohita; rather the most important function of his was to extend his ptotective umbrella over his patron. The protective function of the purohita becomes clear when we read that "the gods do not eat the oblations of a king without a purohita who is Agni Vaiśvānare, possessed of five missiles, which are in his speech, feet, skin, heart and organ. With these he keeps enveloping the king as the ocean the earth. His kingship does not perish he lives a full life who has for purohita to guard the kingdom of a brāhman with his knowledge" *(Aiteraya Brāhmaṇa* viii. 24). It is not only the ritual acts or words of a purohita that have the power of protecting the king from the attack of enemies or evil forces; rather his very physicial being is said to be a sufficient insurance angainst any natural or supernatural danger. He is divinity *par excellance* by and in itself. It is the very presence of purohita that saves one from danger.

The institution of purohita, in due course of time, was made hereditary, the aura and halo of divinity that emanated from the person of a purohita was passed on at the time of his death, to his son. The son became the claimant of the divinity of his father by virtue of his being the son. Thus the theory of succession was allowed to come into being. It is in this context of successien that we can understand the assertion that the family of Vasiṣṭha is endowed with special divine powers. (*Taittirīya Saṁhitā* iii. 5 · 2 ; *Rigveda,* vii . 83 . 4) During the Epic period Vasiṣṭha is shown as playing the major role in the court of Rāma. The importance of Vasiṣṭha is said to be such that the gods revealed the most secret knowledge to him alone; therefore the injunction : it is preferable to have a Vasiṣṭha as a purohita. It is the purothita who, alongwith the king, constitute, as it were the unity of the kingdom. [14] The good of the kingdom, and thereby of the king, is mirrored and reflected in the being of purohita. The purohita, therefore, is seen as " the half of the self of the prince " (Aiteraya Brāhmaṇa, vii. 26.4). As the purohita and the king form a mystical unity, so they are asked to perform certain rituals conjointly. Not every brāhman could

be a purohita. Only such a brāhman could assume the role of a purohita who could get any favour easily granted by the heavenly deities, and who could perform the Vedic sacrifices with meticulous care and expertise.

The function of a purohita was not only to protect the King. He had to see to it that the kingdom was prosperous with milk and honey. Whenever the kingdom of the king faced some trouble, the purohita would, through his supernatural powers, see to it that none was hārmed. The king, therefore, is asked to appoint a purohita " who is versed in *mantras* and rituals, master of the threefold knowledge, skilful at work, a conquorer of the senses, subduer of anger, devoid of greed and passion, equipped with a knowledge of the six ancilliary sciencas (of the Veda) and of the science of archery with all its branches, one who knows the moral as well as religious interests, .. or whose anger even the king takes to virtuous ways of life, one who is well up in *niti-śāstra* (political science) and master of military implements and tactics " (*Śukraniti* i. 9).

All the roles as it were, rolled together, during the Epic period, in the person of purohita. Thus the position of a real teacher was fomidable. Whether it is *Rāmāyana* or *Mahābhārata*, we find in both of them the mighty presence of the guru alive. It is the guru who is the ultimate deciding factor about the course that the disciple is asked to take. The king, even though having advisers and ministers, is repeatedly told never to depart from the advise of his teacher. The non-presence of brāhmans and of teachers of repute in the court brings ill upon the king. A King who deliberately and willfully causes injury either to his teacher or to a brāhman meats destruction and defeat (*Manusmriti*, ix. 321). It is because of the dignity of the office of the teacher that special respect is shown to the teacher who inparts both the textual and mystical knowledge of the Vedas, the teacher who performs sacrifices on behalf of his client *yajmāna*, and the family priest (*purohita*). These teachers are held in high esteem not only because they are learned, but because they carry both learning

and spiritual authority in their person. It is not the temporal power of the king that inspires awe among the people; rather it is the spiritual power of the guru that people cherish. As the role of the guru is bigger than the canvas of life, so everyone seeks his benign favour. The people as it were, discover the divine image in the guru. It is this understanding of the guru that gave rise to the "doctrine of Guru's grace" (*guru Prasāda*). The people firmly hold the conviction that they alone obtain release from the troubles of life who are favoured by the guru, or, in other words, it is the grace of guru that releases from the tight grip of bondage, (*pāśā*). This belief has its basis in a kind of vision in which the guru is seen as God in a human form. In other words, guru is God-Man. Thus we are told that Gaya, without studying the Vedas, understood the heart of the Vedas because of guru's grace. As the guru was seen to be God-incarnate, so the practice of worshipping the image of the guru was bound to happen. The image worship of the guru can even be found during the Epic period, as we learn that Ekalavya learnt the art of archery by worshipping the image of his guru Dronācārya. It is this pan-Indian spirit that has, from the Vedic times onwards seized on the Indian religious psyche. It is a spirit or orientation that expresses itself in terms of the belief that it is guru who can, while in the midst of temporality, reveal the atemporal in and through his person. As such, he is considered as the con-fluence or meeting-place of the temporal and eternal. He is, therefore, the living flame of the holy tradition which the office of the guru embodies. The living tradition of the guru is actualised when he, through the ritual acts, effectuates transcendence. The guru as an ideal is seen to be of the highest order. As a man of power and knowledge, the guru, through sacramental initiation and instruction, guides the student on the path of spiritual perfection.

Let us, at this point of discussion, dwell upon an important function of the guru, namely, *dīkṣā* (initiation or consecration). *Dīkṣā*, in the Vedic context, denoted preparation

for, or consecration of a religious rite or ceremony. It was the *adhvaryu* (that is, the priest in charge of the ritual acts) who prepared the sacrificer for the ritual "re-birth". The adhvaryu, through sacral acts and through the pronouncement of the *word (mantra)*, declared the sacrificer as consecrated. Once consecrated, the sacrificer had a initiatory rebirth. In all the schools of Hinduism, whether they be S'aivite, Vaiṣṇavite, Tāntric or Yogic, it is the guru who, like the Vedic adhvaryu, declared, after the ritual acts and verbal pronouncements, the disciple as an initiate. The guru, as it were, bestowed a new birth upon the disciple through the ritual of initiation. To effect initiatory rebirth in the disciple, the teacher had to be both learned and spiritually powerful. He was expected to initiate a student only after a long probation. After the initiation, the guru imparted the instructions in accordance with the disposition and worth of the student. The guru, therefore, had to function both as a confessor and a guide. Not only had the teacher to teach the doctrines of his school; he had to impart the techniques of concentration, that is, of Yoga. It was at the time of initiation that the guru imparted the secret *mantra* to his disciple (see *Ahirbudhnya-samhitā*, ch. xx). Once the guru had initiated the disciple, he saw to it that the disciple came in contact with God. The knowledge of, and meditation upon, the gurūs *mantra* enabled the disciple to gain control over himself, and thereby realise inner autonomy. A *mantra* is said to be efficacious in so far as it is received from the mouth of a teacher. The *mantra* frees the disciple from the structures of becoming the moment, through concentration and meditation, it is interiorised.[15] It is through interiorisation that identity with the mantric essence is realised. The human guru, therefore, is not only a representative, but a manifestation, of the True Guru (sadguru). Being divine in origin, the guru is considered as the root of initiation, nay, initiation itself. A *mantra* apart from initiation has no value. What it boils down is that the guru as the root and basis of initiation, empowers a *mantrā* with energy through initiatory rituals and acts. Thus the belief that the power of the *mantra* (symbolised by a deity) enlivens the one to whom the grace of the guru is transmitted.[16] The

transference of the energy from the guru to the disciple is enacted through the process of ritual initiation. It can, however, also be transmitted by a mere touch or gaze of the guru. The process of transmission can also be effected through a *mantra*. The grace of the guru is available to the disciple who obeys and honours his guru.

It will be well to remember that the deificatory attitude towards the guru was not confined to brāmanism alone; it permeated each segment of Indian society. Whether it is Buddhism or Jainism, the same reverence and honour is shown to the guru as it is to be found in brāhmanism. The guru is seen both in Buddhism and Jainism as the only means of obtaining freedom from the circuit of cosmic becoming.[17] When a Buddhist novice, for example, forsakes his family name, he is called the "son of the Buddha" (*sākyaputto*). This new being or rebirth is realised by the novice through initiation. It is through initiation that the novice enters, as it were, into supernatural realm. In the *Milindapañha* a detailed account is given about the qualities of a guru: "When a pupil (*antevāsikā*) is practising rightly the teacher should practise twenty-five qualities of a teacher. He should constantly and continuosly keep guard over his pupil; he should let him know about slothfulness and diligence; he should let him know the occasion for lying down; .. about illness; .. what food he may accept or reject; .. he should share with him what has gone into the bowl; he should console him; .. he should not hold (foolish) conversation with him; having seen a defect, he should have patience with it; he should be zealous; do nothing partially; keep nothing secret; hold nothing back; arouse the attitude of a begetter, thinking; 'how should he not deteriorate'; arouse an attitude (for strength): thinking: 'I will make him strong with the strength of the rules of training'; arouse an attitude of friendliness; he should not forsake him in distress, and not be slothful in any thing to be done; by means of the rule (*dhammena*) he should befriend him if he stumbles."[18]

The Buddhists, like the Hindus, firmly believe that the practice of *mantra* of *dhāraṇī*, of yogic techniques of concentration and of *samādhi* will bear the desired fruit only if the disciple is initiated and guided by an accomplished guru. The words of a guru, therefore, are treated as nectar from heaven for the simple reason that they facilitate the realisation of *nirvāṇa*. The *summum bonum* of life is seen in *nirvāṇa*, for it is in and through *nirvāṇa* that the extinction of suffering is realised.[19] Complying with this line of thought, the various Tantric and yogic schools hold that, without a proper initiation, the esoteric content of the sacred lore will remain hidden and concealed. The ultimate point or goal of life can never be reached without the initiation and guidance of a teacher.[20] The guru in human form, being God-Man (that is, God-incarnate), is the true manifestation and representation of the one true guru (*sadguru*). What this assertion amounts to is that the guru is none other than God himself. Being God himself, he is considered to be both the source as well as the means of and for liberation (cf. *Yogasūtras*, i. 26).

The Working of initiation, i. e. of rebirth, begins at the moment when the disciple, through the faculty of discrimination (*viveka*), begins to differentiate Matter from Spirit. As such, the guru sharpens the intellect of, and removes the stains of passions and residual impressions from, the disciple. The guru transforms the being of the disciple through the transmission of vital energy or by eliminating the spiritual and moral deficiencies or lacks that hinder the spiritual progress of the disciple.[21]

The fall of divine grace of God (*śaktipāta*) upon the disciple takes place when the guru transmits it through initiation. It is so because guru is said to be God himself; therefore he is said to be redeemer and deliverer of sentient beings (*Tantrāloka*, xiii. 159). Whatever distinction between the guru and the disciple, at the human level, may exist, it disappears the moment transcendent light shines in the disciple. The disciple, after illumination, sees that the categories of distinction were illusory and

of apparent character. The disciple is now in a state of consciousness whereby he is able to identify himself with his guru.

As the task of the guru is seen to uplift the weak and helpless, so the great Vaiṣṇavite mystic and philosopher, Rāmānuja, thought that God's grace (*anugraha*) manifests itself in and through the person of guru. The purpose of this grace, according to Rāmānuja, is to protect the disciple. The basic function of grace is to bring the disciple in closer contact or relationship with God. This thought concerning the role of guru was further enhanced by one of the greatest medieval mystics, namely, Kabīr, (1440-1518). Kabīr believed that guru is but God himself in a human form. It is the favour or grace of guru, according to Kabīr that frees the disciple from the chains of bondage. It is guru alone who is said to be the ultimate authority concerning the knowledge of good and evil. And it is in his power alone to rescue the good from evil.[22] They who, maintains Kabīr, respect not their teacher suffer from the pain of rebirth. The disciple will never know the secret doctrine of mysticism unless initiated by a true guru. The *Śiva saṁhitā* (iii. II) concurs with this opinion of Kabir by saying that that knowledge alone is fruitful that is received from a guru. The followers of Caitanya (1485-1533) accept the viewpoints of Rāmānuja and Kabir concerning the status of guru. They believe that the revelation of God occurs either in the soul, or through guru or scriptures. Since the guru is one of the mediums of divine communication or disclosure, so he is to be honoured and respected. As the revealer of God, he posseses the knowledge of the mystery of God.[23] The very consent of Guru to impart the divine knowledge of God must be seen in terms of grace. The disciple, therefore, is asked to serve and obey his teacher.[24] As he is the source of divine revelation, so the guru is to be worshipped as the embodiment of God. It is from the heart of guru from where the stream of love *(bhakti)* towards God streams forth.[25] The worshipful

attitude of the disciple creates a kind of mystery around the guru. The mysteriousness of the guru is awe-inspiring. Every effort is made not to displease the guru, and so Tulsī Dās (1532-1622) is led to say that if the guru himself is wroth, there is none in the world who can save" (*Rāmāyana*, i. 169). Instead of God, it is guru who is worshipped, for he manifests and represents God concretely[27] (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* vi. 23). It is the devotion to, and worship of, the guru that enables the seeker to experience unity with God, and thereby with his guru. The absolute trust in the guru's divinity is confirmed by Nānak (—1539) who believed that the knowledge of the mysterious Name (i. e., God) can be had only from a true guru. For him, it is guru alone who reveals the mysterious Name of God.

The belief in the divinity of guru has continued to this day. Although many changes have occured in so for as the role and function of the guru is concerned, however, his basic role of a spiritual guide and teacher has remained the same as it might have existed three thousand years ago. The need of a true guru has repeatedly been affirmed by the contemporary Indian thinker. Gandhiji, the father of modern India, confirms this attitude when he writes: " I believe in the Hindu theory of guru and his importance in spiritual realisation. I think there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that knowledge is impossible without a guru. Only a perfect *jnānī* deserves to be enthroned as a guru.[28]

- Moti Lal Pandit

Notes –

11. V. M. Apte, in *The History and Culture of the Indian People* (London, 1951), p. 455; V. S. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, p. 282.
12. R. B. Pandey, *Hindu Saṁskāras* (Benares, 1949), pp. 186 ff.
13. A. A. Mecdonell & A. B. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects*, ii (Benares, 1958), p. 274.

14. See A. K. Coomarswamy, "Spiritual Authority and Temporal Power in the Indian Theory of Government." *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 22 (New Haven, 1942).
15. A. Avalon, *Tantra of the Great Liberation(Mahānirvāṇa-tantra)* (Madras, 1953), p. lxxix.
16. J. Woodroffe, *Introduction to Tantra Śāstra* (Madras, 1952), p. 65.
17. See Jagmanderlal Jaini, *Outlines of Jainism,* ed. by F. W. Thomas (Cambridge 1940), p. 108; B. Bhattacharya, *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism* (Oxford, 1932), p. 93; A. Avalon, *Principles of Tantra* (Madras, 1952), p. 78.
18. See I. B. Horner, *Milinda's Questions* (London, 1963), pp. 130 ff.
19. R. Saṁkrtyāyana, *Hindi Kāvyādhārā* (Allahabad, 1945), p. 20.
20. T. M. P. Mahadevan, *Outlines of Hinduism* (Bombay, 1965), p. 207.
21. R. D. Ranade, *Pathway to God in Hindi Literature* (Bombay, 1957), p. 334.
22. N. MacNicol, *Indian Theism* (Oxford, 1915), p. 142.
23. Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj, *Caitanyacaritāmṛti,* ii. 8.
24. *Ibid* , ii. 22.
25. *Idid* , i. I; ii. 25. See also M. T. Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement* (Oxford, 1925).
26. See F. E. Keay; *Kabir and his Followers* (Oxford, 1931).
27. L. Renou, *Religion of Ancient India* (London, 1953), p. 95.
28. M. K. Gandhi, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth,* p. 211.

MEDITATION
A N D
Shri Gurudev Ranade

Shri Rambhau Ranade was studying in Jamkhandi for his matriculation examination in 1901. In that Year, Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj Umadikar paid a visit to Jamkhandi for blessing his disciples. Bhausaheb Maharaj was a well-known and powerful God-realised soul and Rambhau went to meet him. Rambhau was fortunate to receive initiation in *Nāma-Mantra* from Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj. He was then only about 15 Years old. In one of the discourses of Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj, which Rambhau attended, he casually remarked, " If one meditated on the Divine Nāma regularly, one might also pass the examination with credit. " Rambhau took to intensive meditation and in the Matriculation examination of 1902, he stood first in Sanskrit and secured the most coveted prize of first Shankarshet Scholarship. This result convinced Rambhau about the efficacy of meditation on Divine Nāma and at the same time, his devotion to Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj became firm.

After passing his matriculation examination, Rambhau joined the Deccan College, Pune for his further studies. He lived an orthodox life in the College hostel. The College, was manned mainly by British professors and they were impressed by Rambhau's intelligence, simplicity and purity of character. Principal Bain admitted the intellectual eminence of Rambhau. Prof. Wodehouse taught English and philosophy. His meditation on the Divine Name started to give him spiritual experiences. One such experience of 1908 is recorded and it occured in the bungalow of Prof. Wodehouse. He saw through a window of that bungalow a large expanse of Light reaching

the sky. He got up from his seat; others also followed him and saw the Light. Unfortunately, his ill-health brought interuption in his College career. At last, he passed his M. A. examination, standing first in first class and winning the Chancellor's Gold Medal.

Rambhau was seriously ill in 1909 on account of brain tuberculosis (cerebral pthysis) and the Principal and Professors of the Deccan College made arrangements for his treatment at the European hospital. He however perferred to go for his stay in Godbole wada for his treatment with Ayurvedic medicines. In this wada, Shri Mhaiskar, a friend of Rambhau, started to read Bhagavatgita for the patient. When Shri Mhaiskar was reading aloud the 58th shloka in the 18th chapter of the Gita :

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।
अथ चेत्त्वमहंकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि (1)

Rambhau immediately caught the essence of that shloka and decided to merge in God through meditation on the Divine Name and thereby to overcome all his difficulties including his illness. He wrote a letter to Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj on 1-4-1909 about the condition of his health. In reply, he received from his spiritual master blessings and " Prasad ", which he consumed and his health started to improve. On account of his intensive and devoted meditation; he got spiritual experiences and came to know what was meant by Godrealisation.

Rambhau was enrolled as Life member of the Deccan Education Society in 1914. A son was born to him early in 1916. This happiness was short-lived. The son passed away by about the end of 1916. Thereafter, his wife passed away in 1918 and soon thereafter, his mother also passed away. All these worldly calamities did not deter him from his spititual pursuits. He consoled himself that God had removed all his worldly attachments, as Saint Tukaram had said in one of his Abhangas. (2)

Rambhau continued his meditation with full concentration on the Divine Name and complete surrender to his Ṣadguru. His spiritual experiences grew and by about the end of 1920, when he was in Inchageri, he started to hear different divine names during the periods of his meditation. Rambhau consulted Shri Amburao Maharaj, his senior *Guru-bandhu*, about this phenomenon and was told that he was blessed by the Sadguru to initiate other deserving seekers in the divine names which he was hearing during the periods of his meditation. He used to hear divine names not only in Hindu religion but also in Christianity, Islam and Zoroastrianism. He had disciples from Christian and Muslim communities in addition to the Hindus ; but there was no Parsi as his spiritual disciple. He started to initiate Sadhakas on a large scale after the passing away of Shri Amburao Maharaj in 1933 and soon came to be known by his disciples as Gurudev Ranade.

Gurudev Ranade left the Deccan Education Society, Pune in 1924. In August 1924, he started an institution known as " Academy of Philosophy and Religions " with the object of " bringing together all those who are interested in the philosophical investigation of the problem of God, through research in all the philosophies and religions of the world, publication of original books, lectures etc "(3). His first *magnum opus*–Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy' was published under the auspices of this Academy. He wanted to place mysticism on a truly philosophical basis; and his literary works were directed towards that objective. The ',Academy" had a short life for want of good response.

The Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University was much impressed to read the Volume, " Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy " ; and he invited Prof. Ranade to join the Allahabad University. Prof. Ranade joined that University by about the end of 1927 as Head of the Department and Professor of Philosophy. In Allahabad, "Gurudev used to go for his afternoon spiritual meditation in a solitary place near Prayag Station, which is known as

'Oont Khāna' (उंट खाना) or the abode of camels. This place was very close to the University and it contained a huge long row of old peepal trees. Gurudev used to sit for meditation in his car in this lonely spot for hours together" (4). Gurudev was seeing God, experiencing God, everywhere. He moved with God as his companion. He was normally spending 7 hours every day in his meditation. " In the beginning he used to control meditation ; then his meditation began to control him " (5) He was however not contented when he reached the apex of his spiritual life. He decided to help others also on the Pathway to God " The supreme value of God-realisation for oneself is to create conditions for the realisation of God in and for others. To instil and defuse the influx of God in the society is the highest social work, which the saints spontaneously do. They lead humanity to a position of faith, moral purity and bliss. Their endeavour is to work for the " Spiritual unity of mankind " and consequent peace and goodwill upon earth, because such unity alone will be of an abiding and permanent nature. Such a fundamentally unifying principle cannot be found anywhere else except, in the spiritual nature of man. God-realisation is the supreme unifying principle binding all humanity together "(6).

With this ideal in view, Shri Gurudev registered a public trust inBelgaum in 1952, known as Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion. The land in Belgaum, received by him as gift from the Rajesheb of Sangli in 1950, was earmarked as the property of this public trust. The name of the trust followed the name of the institution wihich was started by him in 1924 and the aims and objects of the trust, which were almost similar to the aims of that institution, are :

" To work for the spiritual unity of mankind and consequent peace and goodwill upon earth, bringing together intellectual and spiritually-minded persons through (1) spiritual symposium, (2) Study and research ; (3) Lectures, (4) Meetings and conferences and (5) religious and philosophical publications. "

Shri Gurudev could do very little work for this trust on account of his previous engagements and weak health; and he passed away on 6-6-1957. The District Judge, Belgaum appointed a panel of five trustees to succeed him and this board of trustees took over the administration of this trust by the end of 1962. Gurudev Mandir was constructed on the land of the trust and "Padukas" of Shri Gurudev were installed in the 'Sanctum sanctoram' of the Mandir at the hands of a great spiritual soul, Prof. N. G. Alias Tatyasaheb Damle. The Mandir building was inaugurated on 8-12-1965 at the hands of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, who was then the President of India. In his inaugural address, Dr Radhakrishnan said inter alia "Ranade, to the best of his ability, performed meditation, throughout his life and was trying to see God face to face, to have direct encounter with Reality-Personal communion-that is what our sages have spoken to us as the true end of religious life"; and he further added, "Ranade was a man who by sheer exertion, by real practice, meditated long time, long hours, and tried to catch the spirit of God and see God face to face"(7).

These words of Dr Radhakrishnan reached the hearts of some seekers of spiritual life ; and they started making enquiries as to whom they should approach for initiation, as Gurudev was not available to them for that purpose. Shri Kakasaheb Tulpule and Shri Babasaheb Sangoram, who were the Chairman and member of the board of truestees respectively, told these persons that they should choose the Divinity for whom they had the highest respect and love, and after writing the name of that Divinity on a piece of paper and keeping that paper on the "Padukas" in the Gurudev Mandir, they should start meditation on that Divine Name, with full faith that the Divine Name has come from Shri Gurudev Himself. They were further advised to keep that paper in a sacred box and continue meditation for as long a period every day as possible on that Divine Name. Some seekers spoke to Shri Tulpule and Shri Sangoram that they were progressing satisfactorily on the Pathway to God and have secured peace of mind and contentment. This practice of initiation

has continued in the Gurudev Mandir and some persons have received initiation in this way. They are specifically told to observe virtuous and pious life and that without a pure and chaste life, mere meditation would not bring them any good results. Woman and gold (Kāmini and Kanchan) are the primary distractors which lure the earnest spiritual seeker of the Pathway to God. The spiritual seeker should not fall a prey to his ego; and avoid being a victim of pride. " Pride makes a man to speak insolently to others, to beat them and to attack them. Those who are victims of pride forget the balanced sense of discrimination between high and low or good and bad" (8). " A true life of mysticism teaches full – fledged morality in the individual and a life of absolute good to the society " (9). Gurudev Ranade used to test a seeker about his moral life and his earnestness for initiation in the *Nāma mantra*. There are instances of persons whom he declined to initiate or in whose case, he postponed initiation. Such denial or postponement is not now possible in the case of seekers who now receive initiation before the " Padukas " in Gurudev Mandir or " Samadhi " in Nimbal. These seekers have therefore to be advised in strong terms to live a fully moral life. Every seeker should renunciate his vices and pick up virtues, the divinely good virtues such as harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, absence of crookedness, renunciation etc, mentioned in Chapter XVI of the Bhagavatgita. Backed with a moral life, the seeker should spend as long a time as possible every day in his meditation on the Divine Name. " We should never forget God's name. whether we may be merged in happiness or in sorrow, in dejection or in anxiety. At the time of joy and at the time of calamity.. we should always utter the Name of God. Whenever difficulties overtake us, whenever we are down with the worries of life we should meditate on the Name of God " (10), Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj always used to say that awareness is Brahman; and non-awareness is illusion (आठव तो ब्रह्म: नाठव तो भवभ्रम).

A person like Mahatma Gandhi, who was morality incarnate, stated that " not a minute in my life have I been forgetful of God ". (11).

Community meditation is a special feature of this "Sampradaya". Gurudev Ranade insisted on community meditation and firmly believed that progress in spiritual life would be possible if meditation is done in the company of the Sadguru and virtuous Sadhakas. The Sadhakas were asked by him to sit for meditation in the room, adjoining his own personal room in Nimbal from 8 a. m. to 12 noon; and nobody would leave his place for fear that Shri Gurudev would mark him out. It would therefore be necessary to bring to the notice of the Sadhakas, particularly those recently initiated, that mere individualistic meditation on God would not be as effective as in the holy company of the spiritual master and his honest devotees. " It had been regarded as the most effective means of heightening the intensity of meditation–Moreover, "where two or three gather in My name, I am there," declares the Lord. The presence of God in the gathering of Saints and Sadhakas is supremely inspiring and blissful. When the Sadhakas meet together for meditation, they enjoy the presence of God. (12).

In order to engage the Sādhakas continuously in spiritual Sādhana, Gurudev was having Satsang (called by them as sittings) every day in the afternoon. In these sittings, "Shri Gurudev never posed as a Master. He always sat in a corner, along with his disciples, on the same carpet. He never delivered a sermon. He thus demonstrated as it were through his behaviour, the way in which an ideal spiritual Master should conduct himself."

"As these sittings were informal, Sri Gurudev's inner thoughts and feelings had a spontaneous expression in them. These sittings were not always serious; they were occasionally illumined by flashes of wit, humour and consequent laughter. Sri Gurudev also took a lively part in them without the least reservation. At times he himself would relate a humourous anecdote or story and begin to have a hearty laugh and plunge all in a hilarious laughter. Generally Gurudev did not take an active part in the discussion. Still his silence was itself more eloquent than his

words. He always loved to make others speak for him. However, his occasional fine remarks provided a feast of *Bodha – Sudha* – ambrosia of advice-both about spiritual knowledge as well as about divine devotion served along with various dishes suited to the varied tastes of the devotees ".

" In this way, the talks generated love for spiritual life in many; fortified their faith by removing indirectly their misgivings and misconceptions, supplied them fresh inspiration to steadily pursue the spiritual sadhana by giving them the necessary guidance ". (13)

" नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति–

Gods's experience is to be regarded as a mountain, the approach, the attack and the appropriation of which is equally difficult; but once the process is started, its immanent energy or hope will carry you to the end in the midst of, and inspite of, difficulties ". (14)

While releasing the Silver Jubilee Souvenir, vol-I on 22-12-1978, the hon'ble Justice Y. V. Chandrachud, Chief Justice of India. stated inter alia : " I have no claim to spiritualism as it does you have. But that does not mean that, I am out of it. I can give you a small secret that, there is hardly a day when I do not do my meditation and if there is one thing which sustains me in the midst of my very strenuous routine of work I believe that, it is a 20 minutes meditation without fail. It gives me the greatest relaxation. If somebody in the court gets angry with me, I am able to resist getting angry with him. " (15)

Meditation is therefore a must for one and all. It brings peace of mind. It gives contentment. It bestows blissfulness in life.

NOTES

1] Translation by Swami Chinmayanand :-
"Fixing Your mind upon me, You shall, by my grace, overcome all obstacles, but if from egoism, you will not hear Me, you shall perish"

2] Tukaram's Abhang :

वाईल मेली मुक्त झाले । देवे माया सोडविली ।
विठो तुझे माझे राज्य । नाहीं दुसऱ्याचें काज ।। धृ
पोर मेले वरे जालें । देवे मायाविरहित केलें ।।२
माता मेली आंज देखनां । तुका म्हणे हरली चिंता ।।३

3] Biography and Mysticism-P-169 : By S. N. Deshpande.

4] Ibid P-194.

5] Silver Jubilee Souvenir Vol-I [P-188] : Ed. K. D. Sangoram & M. S. Deshpande.

6] Ibid. Vol-II [P-XII]

7] Ibid-PP. 24, 26

8] Biography and Mysticism P-207- By S. N, Deshpande,

9] Ibid P-183

10] Mysticsm in Maharashtra -PP 399-400; R. D. Ranade,

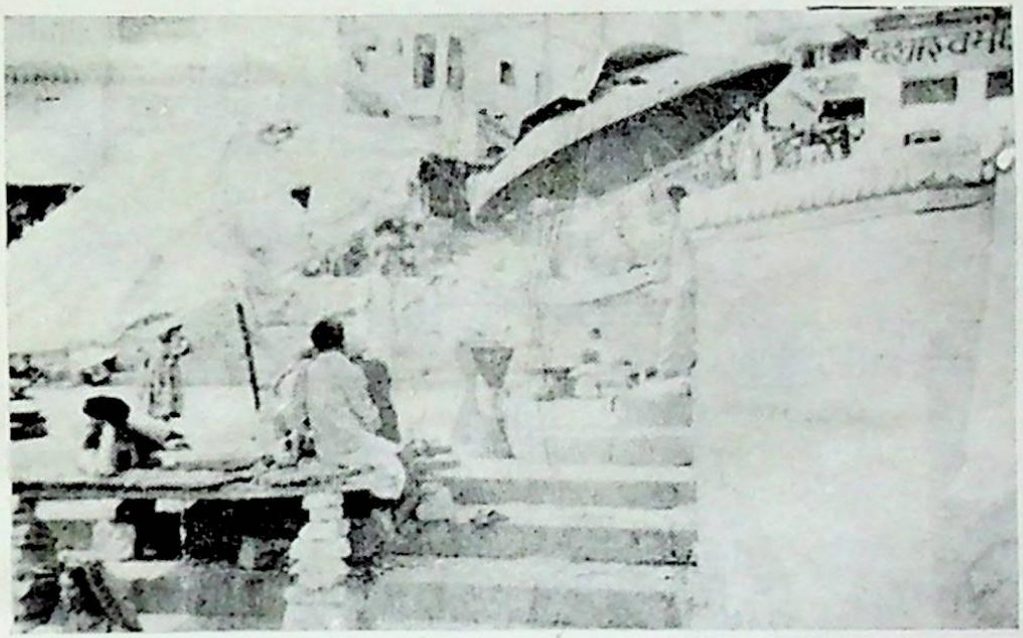
11] The Conception of Spritual Life in Mahatma Gandhi and Hindi Saints [P 63], Prof, Dr, R, D, Ranade.

12] Silver Jubilee Souvenir Vol. I (p-201)

13] -do- pp. 201-202

14] पुण्यस्मृती-P-120. K. D. Sangoram.

15] Pathway to God (Journal) Vol. XIII No. 2 (January 1979)



DASASWAMEDHA GHAT, Vārānasi
(Close to and contiguous with Vishwanath Ghat)

SHREE KĀSIYĀTRA

A Travelogue ;–

नार्यावर्त समो देशो न काशी सदृशी पूरी ।
नविश्वेश्वर समलिंग क्वापि ब्रह्मण्ड गोलके ॥
वाराणसि, पवित्रमसि ।

" O Kasi Thou art holy; thou art sacred! " Every pious Hindu desires to go to Vārānasi (Kāsi) more especially in old age, with religious purpose of a pilgrimage to holy city of Mother ' Ganga, ' and Lord ' Viswanātha.' In the like manner, as per our vow, we both set out for long journey to Vārānasi. I and my wife decided to go for 10–15 days outing, to pay homage to Mother Ganga and to all the presiding deities, invisible gods, and Saints (Yogi) of the holy city. In Belgaum we are no less fortunate in this religious and mystical obeisance to holy spirit, as there is the blessed presence of Gurudeo Ranade in Mandir. With His blessing, and prayer to His Mercy and Grace, we set out from Mandir to ' Yoga Tantra ' in Vārānasi. So it is not a mere travelogue, nor a tourist guide, although many details are mentioned here in ; it is mainly an account of evidence of Master's presence in all places–more especially in the cities of His Love-Prayāg and Kāsi. Without any design or plan, without any guide or guidance, and also without earlier reservations at Bhusawal and at Varanasi Cantt station, we returned safe and comfortable, after a mysterious visit to Samādhi of one of the greatest Mahants (Swamis) of Kāsi, Late Chandrashekar Swamy of Nippani and Ādi. He was the follower of the Moving Vishwanath, Maha Mahopadhyaya Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj – The Propounder of 'Akhanda Maha Yoga.' Quite mysteriously we stayed nearby His ' Home ' and mysteriously found His address and other particulars from Jangamavādi Math, where too the cycle Rikshaw stopped suddenly for no apparent cause. Lo and behold, there is Kannad Board and also assembly of

'Jangamas' and students at the impressive entrance to holy Kāsi 'peetha'. In this way it was not a pleasure trip-but essentially a 'path way to God' and a plan to meet devotees of Gurudev in Kasi also, and to show them 'path way to God'.

On Thursday at 11 p.m. we boarded the train to Miraj. and were happy to find rail reservation at Miraj (the train coming from Kolhapur). At Bhusawal the next day, the officials obliged with 2 berths in sleeping couch. (there is a special coach to Varanasi and back, running four days in a week. The return journy too was in the same coach from Vārānasi to Miraj Jn. On Saturday morning we reached Varanasi (cantt), past Kasi station on other side of the city (one has not to get down at Kāsi station). The places of tourist interest are the various Ghats, Sri Tulsi Ram Narayan temple, Durgaji, (Mandir) BHU, Sankata Mochana temple of Hanuman in 'Lanka', Vishwanath temple built by Birlas in University campus, Śarnath, the Buddhist holy centre, and Vishwanath Temple. These places have a sanctity, for they are visited by scores of Sadhus and saints in every aeon of ancient past. On Vishwanath Ghat till today people believe that Babaji Maharaj the invisible Master supreme is present in lustrous form to bless the devotees visiting Mother 'Ganga.' The mysteries abound in Sārnath, the abode of peace and silence. The first Sermon of supreme Jnāni, Gautama Buddha was listened by hundreds of pure souls, who gathered from Kasi, the city of piety, austerity and erudition. The learned sanskrit scholars and the pious orthodox devotees of God were amazed to hear the opposite view by an excellent teacher of Dharma (Dhamma) in prakrit and Pali languages. Mother 'Annapurna', praised by Adi Sankaracharya in eight stanzas–Annpurnāstaka–is present with all graceful lustre, beside the golden temple of Lord Viswanath, (Both temples have golden tower) Believe it or not. There is a mysterious halo of Lord Shiva, which changes the devotees outlook towards world and society.

Visiting Vishwanath temple, and Ghat to have a dip in Ganges, one finds a new attitude to life and society. The mysterious nature of the two temples is beyond expression and description because the Mahatmas alone can espy the new changes in mind and spirit. It is not a blind belief or an orthodoxy as foreigners remark seeing the din and bustle of main streets, and rituals performed on the Ghats by devotees. Secondly man can progress in spiritual sense only if he has preparation for new messages, evolution and mysterious introversion of meditation. Some may have experience of miracles and also rewards of puja. But the spiritual aspect of man's merits, and clarity of vision of Truth are more especially present in this holy place- the hub of Indian philosophy and culture. In the third place, even the most scientifically trained learned person will be taken aghast by the recent yogic experiments on 'śatadala Kamala', and 'Dwidala Kamala'- hundred-petal-Lotus and 'dyad-petal-lotus' of 'Akhanda Mahayoga' of "moving Viswanath"-Late Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj Maharaj, and his favourite Lingayat (Jangama) disciple, Late Dr. Chandrashekar Swamaji of Nipani and Ādi. The latter has started a decade back a new centre- 'Yoga Tantra' to commemorate the Yoga teachings of His Master. Tho centre is now looked after by a pious austere yogic person-Dr. Śhakuntala Hora, principal of R. Mohila college, Vārānasi, (She is popularly known as 'Didi'). Dear visitor, please sit silently with her for some time, or in the adjacent room of great master, Dr. (late) Chandrashekar Swamiji for a while to know what the vibrations of yoga and 'Navamandala' are in heart centres! Nothing is openly and overtly shown or expressed, for all mystical experiences, however scientific in nature, are covert feelings of pure mind and heart. Then one must innocently move to northern end of Kasi, about 20 kilometres to Āshapur cross, 'enroute' Gāzipur. And from the Ashapur cross, move in cycle Rickshaw about 2–3 km, further north to visit the most sacred Buddhist centre–Sārnath–the holy place where the enlightened Buddha gave his first sermon. The sermon of Sākyamuni at Sārnath is the way to enlightenment! The temple and Ganga welcome the visitor with mystery and

miracle; but quite contrastingly the Buddhist monestary greets the visitors with silence, innocense and childlike buoyancy of spirit. There are vast stretches of green lawns surrounding Buddhas statue, and a tall big 'stupa' at a place of Buddha's teaching. To the left of the shrine there is chinese monestery which welcomes the visltors with a verse from 'Dhamma pāda' – 'Do good to man, and avoid the evil unto them. Keep the mind pure. This is the goal of man'. One must try during a visit to Kāsi to live in a peaceful mind freed from drosses.

Post Script

Soon after writing the article, in Vārānasi there are sporadic incidents of violence; and this phenomenon of social evil has to be understood in religious and spiritual perspective. I too like an ordinary layman feel at times disturbed by the disorder dismay and dishope. But Lord assures the devotees the coveted grace blessing and reqard of puja, in the from of Grace and wisdom can we ever deny the saving wisdom of Ātmajnāna, by the Grace of Gurudeo, after offering prayers, puja and penance at holy place like Varanasi? I do not propagate the meaning of regard of 'Kasi yatra'–the blessed Lord by His presence. consoles our troubled heart only after our inner purification and penance. How meaningful is the noble reward of piety! Unexpressed is the richness of joy and wisdom for the devout Hindus who go on desire-free 'Tirtha Yatra'– Pilgrimage (we need no facts of verification or confirmation of ever-present Grace of Guru)- Even as I was moving about the southern and northen ends of River City, there were enough distubances, politically, by the angry mobs who were affected by court verdict on 'Mandal commission'. We Went to 'Gurtu Hostel' aud B H U centres, and were happily welcomed by the courteous and hospitable students. The next day as we moved away grom BHU, and city and visited a far off place–the sacred Sārnath of Sākynamuni's sermon, there were many incidents of social evil in the city. (No offices could function that day). The next day as we wanted to move out for other religious places,

normalcy was restored in city. Many visitors come to Kasi, and return with no noticeable change of outlook, But the ways of world are different from the ways of God who resides very distinctly in the heart of pious people. Even the present holocaust has no spiritual meaning in the realm of eternal truth, peace and ' Dharma ' (one may call it ' Dhamma '). Let there be innumerable calamities and catastrophes. But the Lord declares– I am the eternal truth, untouched by empirical facts and ' Vyavahāra. ' So let us console our inner agony, by the assurance of Lord who takes care of His devotes in a prudent way. Amidst the three kinds of miseries, and amidst the ephemeral changes and sorrows there shines the Divine Light of self ! God has His wondrous ways of mystery to remove the sorrow and suffering of His dearest devotees! Religion as the expression of His mystery, outlives all disturbances and revolutions, That is beneficient nature of all-merciful God. ' Tirtha Yatra,' ' puja ' and penance mean rich reward of meaningful Grace of Guru !

– T. F. Bidari.

MEDITATION AND YOUTH

Washington (pTI.) : Want to stay young ? Then meditate. Transcendental meditation helps people stay five to ten years younger, according to a new study. The results of the study, conducted at the Maharishi Ayurveda Health Centre in Lancaster, Massachusetts, was published in the Journal of Behavioural Medicine. The researchers measured levels of the harmone, dhea-5, which peaks in the early 20% and then declines. Men with high levels have been shown to have less cardiovascular and heart disease and lower mortality rates, and women, less breast cancer and osteoporosis. Those who meditated regurarly had higher levels of the hormone.

(Deccan Herald : Saturday, 5-12-1992 (p. 11)

A LETTER OF IMPORT

His Holiness Shri Chandrasekharendra Sarawati Swamiji, Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamkoti Peetha was in Belgaum in 1979. The management of the Peetha requested Shri. J. V. Parulekar, trustee to report any important events which came to his notice. The following letter of special import was addressed by Shri Parulekar to the management.

Dear Sir,

Subject : Information about His Holiness Jagadguru Pujyasri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati.

Reference ; Your appeal without date, which reached me on 28-9-1992.

His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya Senior Swamiji of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham came of on 17-6-1979 to stay in Gurudev Mandir, Belgaum. I had no intimation from the Reception Committee that Sri Swamiji may stay in Gurudev Mandir for some days. On 16-6-1979, at about 10-00 p. m., I received a message that I should be present in Gurudev Mandir the next day morning to receive the Swamiji, if he comes to the Mandir.

I had no knowledge about the requirements of Sri Swamiji. I opened the doors of the Mandir and put on electric lights. The servants were asked to cleanse the approach road, verandah and 3 rooms for the occupation of Sri Swamiji and his attendants. I stood in the verandah at 6-00 A. M. to receive the Swamiji at the entrance, if he comes.

H. H. Shri. Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamiji
Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetha

The reception committee was headed by the Divisional Commissioner, Belgaum and consisted of leading persons of Belgaum and some officers. The members of the committee expected that Sri Swamiji may reach the entrance of Belgaum at about 7-00 a. m. and they reached the spot at about 6–30 a. m. to receive him with garlands and to carry him in procession with music and pomp to a temple in Belgaum city. Sri swamiji probably foresaw these arrangements and slipped in the city before 6–00 A. M. and reached Gurudev Mandir with his 5 or 6 attendants at about 6-00 A. M. I was overjoyed to see this great SAINT of India and received him while entering the Mandir. After they all came in, they saw the accomodation, which was available and I was asked whether it was samadhi of Sri Gurudev Ranade. I replied that we have placed the padukas of Sri Gurudev Ranade in the sanctoram and that his samadhi was in Nimbal.

This shows that Sri Swamiji does not like pomp and publicity. He was a genuine sanyasin and avoided public reception. The reception committee members waited at the entrance of Belgaum and when they came to know that Sri Swamiji had already reached Gurudev Mandir the Divisional Commissioner and others rushed to Gurudev Mandir to meet the Swamiji. A diamond needs no publicity.

Visitors from different parts of India started to flock in Gurudev Mandir to have *Darshan* (दर्शन) of this great sanyasin. Hundreds of persons were coming every day. Food was served to all of them from the kitchen, run by the disciples of this distinguished Shankaracharya. One of the visitors was the Hon'ble Justice Shri Rangnath Misra, Chief Justice of the Bihar High Court. Instead of wearing pants, he was wearing a clean white dhoti and another piece of white *dhoti* (उपरणे) for covering his upper part of the body. He was staying in a hotel in the city, coming to Gurudev Mandir every day in the morning and standing from about 8 A. M. by the door of the Sanctoram, looking at the Swamiji who was sitting by the side of the *Tulasi Katta with padukas*

of shri Gurudev Ranade. He used to leave the Madir at about 12 noon ; and in the afternoon he used to come again and stand by the door of the sanctoram from 3–00 p. m. to 6–00 p. m. He was thus visiting Gurudev Mandir for about ten or twelve days. What a wonderful sight ! A chief Justice of a High Court standing for hours on his legs in the door eagerly gazing at a lean and bare–bodied sanyasin, sitting in the sanctoram of the Mandir.

I was myself paying my homage to the Swamiji, both in the morning at about 10 a. m. and in the afternoon at about 4 p. m. After receiving his blessings, I used to move out, giving place to others. I had then surgical operation on my hip on account of bone fracture and was not able to prostrate in front of Shri Swamiji or to sit on the ground. It seems Shri Swamiji had come to know this fact. One day, when I was having *darshna* (दर्शन) of the Swamiji in the afternoon, he did not allow me to move out immediately. By a sign of his fingers, he asked me to wait. He asked one of his attendants to bring a chair and he brought a chair. I was told to sit on the chair. Sri Swamiji looked at me and after about ten minutes, he blessed me and allowed me to move out. Just about that time, I was having pain in the joint of my left arm on account of deposit of calcium and I was thinking of going to a doctor for treatment. The Divine doctor-Dhanwantari-cured the malady by his simple gaze at me. On the 3rd day, the pain completely disappeared, and I expressed my gratitude to this Dhanwantari–the saint of Kanchi Kamakoti Math.

Thanking you,

Yours Faithfully,

–Sd

(J. V. PARULEKAR)

TRUSTEE

Book Review

Storytellers, Saints, and Scoundrels. By Kirin Narayan Publishers : Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited: Delhi. Price Rs. 180/-

The author has depicted a good picture of real saints and pseudo saints or scoundrels, Sadgurus and fictitious and false gurus. She collectd the information from a person, described as Swamiji in the book. He was born in a Brahmin family in Karnataka and visited several pilgrim centres in India in search of spiritual Knowledge. He was initiated in Sanyāsa in 1962. He practised penance and spent hours in meditation and became a God-realised person. He settled down in Nasik. Gradually, visitors started to flock around him. Several of them sought relief from domestic worries and health problems. The Swamiji received from them nothing and if any money or present was offered by any visitor, it was refused. The Swamiji had thus no property or possessions. He wore ochre clothing to cover his body and generally talked to the audience in Hindi. There were people from the west and from the East, who listened to the talks of the Swamiji. People from several parts of India also gathered around him for his *darshan* and advice.

The Swamiji generally used to give his replies through the medium of stories. Story-telling was used by him as a vehicle for religious teaching. With happiness and smile on his face, he used to tell these stories and they had therefore very good effect on the listeners. Some of the questions of the listeners were explained away in the stories and they went back happy and contented, carrying with them high respect and devotion for the Swamiji. Swamiji 's speeches appear like Ganges river flowing, a source of purity, a centre of sacredness. Only 8 stories

are reproduced in this book by the author. The Swamiji's talks and stories contain illuminating advice. A few instances may be enumerated here :

1) More than seeing Bhagavan, you should *Become* Bhagavan.

2) Bhagavan has no form. If you want to reach the formless, you can only go from what has form to what has no form.

3) Dharma means religion, but also stands for duty, role, function, righteousness and law.

4) Wherever there is a space in a temple, there is a priest (pujari) to make money. This is the dark age; people have no sense of Bhagavan inside them.

5) Harbour no grudges, remain indifferent, control the senses : This is what is called Sanyās. It is not the beard; nor the clothes; it is in the heart.

6) For a Sadhu, the stomach (pet) should be the only trunk for storage (peti).

7) Everybody's body will go. No one's will stop over. Don't meditae on this but on what is inside. *That* is imperishable.

8) There is a difference between a Sadhu and a Svadhu (selfish person). A Sadhu does not work for himself, to gather happiness for himself. A Sadhu works to make others happy. He shows them a path (rāstā), he makes something for them. Then he should walk on and leave it all behind.

9) Ashrams which amassed wealth were slipping away from Narayan and towards Laxmi; by replacing their religious concerns with materialistic ones, they were on the road to both spiritual and monetary bankruptcy.

10) There are two kinds of Sadhus: those who show you the way to find peace of mind, and then those who show you the way to collect money. One does not become a Sadhu to earn.

The talks of the Swamiji-Shri Prakashanand Saraswati, were tape-recorded by the author from time to time. They were sorted out and sifted by her; and this beautiful book is the result. It shows how scoundrels prey on the naive persons by claiming to reveal Bhagavan in various ways; and how a real saint repressnts human perfectibility. Today, we have amidst us a swarm of pseudo saints and scoundrels, pretending to be saints; and readers of this book will know how to find them out and refuse to follow them. The book is interesting to read and the interest is sustained throughout The author deserves congratulations for bringing out such a nice and illuminating book.

P. Jagannath Rao

(2)

'THE HOLY TEACHING OF VIMALAKIRTI', A MAĀYĀNA SCRIPTURE, TRANSLATED BY MR. ROBERT A. F. THURMAN. pp *166. PRICE RS. 125/- only. published by Motital Banarsidas Publishers, Pvt., Ltd., Delhi.*

The Holy Treatise-Mahayāna scripture of the earliest Zen Master Vimalakirti, is an authentic book of Śunyavada, middle path and Nirvāna-the main concepts of Budhism. Mr. Rebert A. F. thurman is a teacher of Indian Religion in Amherst College, and a practising Tibetan Buddhist monk in the United States and India. So he has acces to Tibetan, Indian and Chinese Mahāyāna texts, to contribute in a scholarly way to spread the real message of Śākyamuni. Although a translation of Tibetan version of

original Sanskrit text of Great Bodhisatva Licchavi Vimalakirti, the small great treatise of logical subtlety is as fresh as the original, in text, style, and the fluency of dialogues of Zen Master Vimalakirti with scores of disciples of Lord Gautama Buddha. (Licchavi. (SK) means the tribe in city state having Vaisali as the capital). It is a delight to read the treatise, because it is ornamented with literary poetic expressions and mysterious (Miraculous) descriptions of enlightenment of many Bodhisatwas. There is barely one hundred pages length of main text; but in such a short span there is oceanic information about liberation, liberation-technique, mysteries of many worlds and the infinity of time of Goddess who "served ninety two million billion Buddhas. She plays with the super-knowledges". (vide p. 63 ; sectlon 7.) The book is divided nto twelve sections of the original text, and has meaningful and captivating introduction by the author. After the main text, there are the following sections : Epilogue, copious notes of thirty two pages, and three glossaries – Sanskrit numerical categories and Technical Terms. Readers would enjoy not only miracles, mysterious phenomena of Tathāgata, but would be delighted with the pithy account of Logic of Truth. 'Brevity is the soul of wit' – It is the soul of secret Truth of Mahāyāna texts and scriptures. In a short expression, Vimalakirti is metaphysically and spiritually as profound, deep and significant as the mysterious silence of Lord Gautama Buddha. To quote some expressions : "At the grove of Āmrapāli, by the miraculous power of the Lord, there was the mysterious scene of the vast canopy" "so great that it formed a covering for this entire billion-world galaxy.. .. .. .. At this vision of the magnificent miracle effected by the supernatural power of the Lord Buddha, the entire host was ecstatic, enraptured, astonished, delighted, satisfied and filled with awe and pleasure." The crown prince, Manjushri once asked Vimalakirti. "Good Sir, how should a bodhisatwa regard all living beings ?" Vimalakirti replied "Manjushri, a bodhisattwa should regard all living beings .. .. .. as magicians regard men created by magic, like water in mirage, "like the core of plant in tree .... like a sprout from rotten seed, like the instincts

of passion in a Tathāgata .... like the track of bird in the sky .... like pregnancy of a barren woman; .... like dream-visions seen after waking .. .." (Vide p 56, section 7),

Critics have pointed out one defect of the book.- the absence of glossary of Tibetan terms used in the text. But no one can remark llghtly about the style, content or the design of chapters and substlety of logic. The original sanskrit text is not available for readers; but the English translation is so interesting and so captivating with stories, conversations and miraculous events, that the reader feels at home with the text and narration. Page after page, section after section, one finds deep experiences of Bodhisatwas, and profound experience of Vimalakirti. Five thousand Bodhisatwas were once delighted when in silence Vimalakirti concluded long discussion of Bodhisatwas about the ' Dharma Door of Non -duality'. Thereupon the 'crown prince Manjushri applauded the Licchavi Vimalakirti : Excellent " ! ' Excellent, noble Sir ! This is indeed the entrance into the non-duality of the bodhisatwas. Here there is no use for syllables, sounds and ideas. (vide P. 77, Sec 9). In this section the replies to the query of Vimalakirti given by thirty-two bodhisatwas are sacred words.

In later sections, there is vastness of existence, past and the present Universe called ' Sahā ' Universe; and the universe of fragrance- ' Sarvagandha sugandha.' These details are interestingly narrated in section ten. In the concluding sections there is precise description of the nature of Dharma. In conclusion, it is said by Sākyamnni that the entire narration will be preseved by the sacred sons and daughters of the land as the teaching of Vimalakirti : The Buddha said " Ananda, the exposition of the Dharma is called " The Teaching of Vimalakirti ", or The Reconciliation of Dichotomies or even the ' section of the Inconceivable Liberation'. Remember it thus (vide p 102, Epilogue)

To reach the shores of Buddha's compassion and Love, and to know the meaning of irreversible wheel of Dharma, and the inexpressible liberative technique of 'Vimalakirti', one has to closely follow the nature of 'Sunya, and nature of Buddha-world; and also one has to go beyond dichotomies, contradictions and the world of mind. The Bodhisattwa, Priyadarshana declared. 'Matter itself is void. Voidness does not result from the destruction of matter, but the nature of matter is itself voidness. Therefore, to speak of voidness on the one hand, and of matter or of sensation, or of intellect, or of motivation. or of consciousness on the other-is enrirely dualistic, Consciousness itself is voidness. Voidness does not result from the destruction of consciousness, but the nature of consclousness is itself voidness,' (vide pp 74-75, section-9)

The sacred small treatise is an authentic version of teaching of Lord Gautama Buddha, who is the Master of all times to come - The Master of aeons of change and impermanence. In an exquisite style and in mind - arresting expressions, Mr. Robert Thurman writes in a masterly way, without ever showing that he is merely translating the scripture. Perhaps the mystery of millions of Buddhas touch the heart - lotus of writer, who in a trance-state records glimpses of the inexpressible Truth. For a short treatise of Mahāyāna scripture, the review also as a rule must be short and pithy. But the beautiful scenery, and auspicious assembly of thousands of wise men in Vaiśali town in presence of Vimalakirti, forces one to write elaborately about its nature and content. The logical aspect of nothingness and liberative technique are not elaborately mentioned, because the readers would enjoy them fresh as they read the colourful treatise. 'Dharma' is eternal and infinite, 'Dharma' is inexpressible universality as described by Vimalakirti. May 'Dharma' touch the heart of all living beings of "lower existence" !

—Prof. T. F. Bidari

(3)

'The Path of Fire According to Aspars'a Yoga' By Raphael. pp. 119. Price Rs. 150/- Publisher Motilal Banarsidas Publishers private Ltd: Delhi.

The Starement तत्त्वमासि (Tat Tvam Asi) is interpreted by several scholars. Raphael gives his own analysis of the statement. This is a conversation between two persons. One ot them, Antonio is distressed and worried on account of his sufferings, and wishes to have peace and solution to his problems; and to live a quiet and contented life. The author of this book gives him satisfactory answers and this dialogue finds a place in this book. There is a discussion on Reality; and analysis of the term is given from *Adwaita* point of view. The author has rightly stated "Another characteristic of Reality for Adwaita is that it must be self-evident, non-contradictory and universal ". नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्य :.

Thereafter follows in chapter III a wide discussion on Saguna and Nirguna Brahma. In the world there is only one truth and knowledge; but in the ordinary business of a man, his *Samsaric* life, the same truth looks different, विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेव सत्यम्. *Adwaita* has its own yoga, called *Asparśa* yoga. *Asparśa* is "without contact, without relation, without support". This yoga is given by Gowdapad (गौडपाद) and the same is developed by Shri Shankaracharya (शंकराचार्य) The first step is *Nirguna* निर्गुण and then *Saguna* (सगुण) But it is difficult to understand the influence of *Maya* (माया) or illusion. Shankaracharya explains it. using two terms अविद्या अध्यास. How illusion even creates confusion in the mind of a man is explaind by Upanishadic example. Antonio asks a question : it seems to me that Shankaracharya introduced two orders of Reality, Brahman and Māyā. The author raplies: They are not exactly two orders of Reality. we have said that the only Real is absolute and constant and the only

constant–absolute is Brahman. A dream, for example, disappears completely, leaving no traces for him who wakes up.

Some basic questions are reaised like why are we born ? why do we die ? The answer is very simple. The author tells about harmony. "I do not understand what is this harmony. It is based upon the synthesis of knowledge"; and then, a pure Asparsan is harmony in action. Even though we live in this world, we have to be away from the world. We are in the world but not of the world, World is not away from us. But the real understanding of relation is the basic principle of *Advaita* philosophy. Tat Twam Asi, that is, you are the one whom you are seeing. Everyone must understand this.

The author makes an honest effort to bring home the philosophy of Tat Twam Asi. Vadanta is not a theory but a doctrine, which is not the fruit of intellectual speculation aimed at gratifying the mind in its play. Vedanta, rather than speculation, is above all experimentation. Brahman is merely a name that hides Reality, which has no name. Instead of Brahman, we may use anther name — That. The best analysis of this problem is given by two great disciples of Shri Shankaracharya. Bhamatikāra (भामतिकार) and Kalpatāruka (कल्पतरुकार). Unfortunately, the author has not referred to them. If he had made use of the analysis given by these two great disciples, the book would have been still clearer on the subject and still more valuable.

– Prof. C. B. JOSHI

The Academy of Comparative Philosophy & Religion BELGAUM.

Quarterly Report for the Period Ending on 31-12-1992

1. Sri Shivananda Swamiji of Bankapur, who was on Dharma Yatra, visited Gurudeo Mandir and gave lectures on the teachings of the great veerasaiva Saint Sri Basaweshwar for thrae days from 28-10-1992 to 30-10-1992, in the evening. The lectures were well attended.

2. The Vaikuntha Chaturdashi Nama Saptaha was arranged during the period from 4-11-1992 to 8-11-1992, as usual, in the Gurudeo Mandir. A good number of Sadhakas attended the function. They practised intensive meditation. performed Bhajan and offered Ārati. Lecuters were also arranged during the period. On the last day, prof. N. R. Deshpande, in his lecture, mentioned about his association and experiences with Sri Gurudev Dr. R, D. Ranade, when, as a small boy, he was residing at Allahabad with his father, when Sri Gurudeo was the V. C. of Allahabad University. The function Served special religious value for about 300 people who participated in it.

3. Sri Vidhya, Bhusan Swamiji of Kanva Math, Hunseholli; Dist. Gulburga, gave lectures on Geeta for three days from 16-111992 to 18-11-1992 in the Mandir. Select audience attended the lectures.

4. Tree plantation programme was arranged on 22-11-1992 under the supervision and guidance of Sri N. B. Patil, Conservator of Forests, Belgaum Circle, Belgaum On that day, about 50 N. S. S. volunteers viz., students

of Lingaraj College, Belgaum. cleaned the compound of Gurudev Mandir, for tree plantation from 9-00A. M. to 5-00 P. M., by rendering free service. In the end there was a fine lecture on Sri Gurudeo, by the guest, Sri N. B. Patil. The Chairman, Shri N. S. Metrani, presided. The students were presented a copy of "Thus Spake Gurudev." About 75 plants will now grow in addition to the previous plantation of about 100 trees; and soon, a "Tapovan" will develop in the area of Gurudev Mandir.

5. We thank the following persons for their donations to the Academy.

I) Sri G. P. Mhapsekar, Dharwad Rs. 500/-
II) Sri B. N. Patankar, Sangli Rs. 25/-

LIFE SUBSCRIBER

I) Dr. A. S. Apte, Pune Rs. 50/-(Balance)

J. M. KULKARNI
Secretary
31-12-1992, A. C. P. R. BELGAUM

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BOOK SECTION

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya's

Ātmānātma-Viveka

By-Prof. Dr. K. V. APTE, SANGLI

Section I

- Introduction -

This is serialisation of the small treatise of Shankaracharya on the nature of discrimination. For convenience there is mention only of English translation and Explanation of 78 Aphorisms of Advaita called sections by Dr. Apte, whose unpublished work appears in 'Book Section'
- Ed.

There is an inevitable cycle of pleasure and pain in human life on this earth. Now, in order to remove sorrow, many means are employed by men. One sorrow goes away; but again there is another new sorrow. Thus the sorrow is not absolutely terminated.

This problem of the total removal of sorrow in men's lives has been handled by the philosophical systems in India. The system of Kevalādvaita of Śaṅkarācārya found out a solution of this problem which is as follows :-

The real nature of man is pleasure or happiness; but a man becomes sorry, as he does not know that happiness is fundamental to him. Suppose, there is money in our house, but we are ignorant in respect of the exact whereabouts of,

that wealth. Naturally there is unhappiness as the money cannot be used for various purposes. But as soon as we come to know the exact place of the money and come to possess it, there is pleasure. In a similar manner, a man becomes unhappy, because he has no knowledge of his own nature as bliss or happiness. But if he comes to cognise his own nature as pleasure and if he secures or realises his own nature, he will never become unhappy.

To elucidate the fact mentioned above, the first Śaṅkarācārya had written a small book named "Ātmānātma-Viveka" (also called Ātmānātma-vicāra). In this treatise, he has exposed his Vedānta philosophy in entirety but in brief.

2. Use of Philosophical Terminology.

The concept of the removal of pain mentioned above can be stated in philosophical language, in the following manner :-

In this world, a man has to suffer sorrow, because he is born. After birth there is death after which again there is birth. This wheel of births and rebirths goes on revolving, on account of actions righteous or unrighteous performed by a man with a sense of ego and attachment. Naturally now, freedom from sorrow is nothing but freedom from births and rebirths, This freedom from birth and death means liberation (moksa). Now, what is this liberation or salvation ? It is nothing but the obtainment or realisation, on the part of a man, of his own nature. Now what is the nature of a man ? The fundamntal nature of man is, nothing but the self (atman), the ultimate reality. The self is of the nature of existence, knowledge and bliss. Hence the nature of man is also existence, sentience and happiness. If so, why is a man suffering sorrow ? Man is subject to sorrow because he has forgotten his own original nature, he has become ignorant of his nature, like the man who was ignorant of the whereabouts of his money in the house. On the removal of this forgetfulness

or ignorance, a man becomes aware of his own nature, and then he can secure his own nature.

3. Knowledge of the Self

Now, the question is: How is it known that the nature of man is the same as the Self that is existence–knowledge-bliss (saccidānanda) ? The reply is–This fact is known from the statements of Vedic or scriptural texts and also from the statememts of the saints or spiritual preceptors who have realised the reality of the Self. This is similar to our experience in this world. For instance, we come to know from the statements of other people the things which are unknown to us. Thus, we come to know about the city of Bombay, on the authority of our friend who has visited Bombay. It is known from the statements of the astronomers that there are "black holes" in the space. In a similar manner, we come to know, on the authority of the scriptures and the saints who have direct perception of the Self, that we are the Self which is existence, consciousness, and happiness.

4. The Self and the Universe

In our usual empirical dealings, we get the knowledge of the surrounding world through our senses. Now, at the basis of this world there is the Self which is one, ultimate, supreme, and true principle. Due to absence of knowledge or ignorance of this Self, the world appears to us. For example, we come to see a snake on the rope, and we get terrified. But after true knowledge of the rope, there does not remain any snake and then we lose our fear. In a similar way, as we see the world and not the Self, we come in contact with it and start to suffer sorrow and to enjoy pleasure sometimes. But when we get the true knowledge of the Self there does not remain any different thing like the world and hence there does not remain anything which can be called sorrow.

5. Liberation due to the knowledge of the Self

The Self is Brahman. He who knows Brahman becomes

Brahman, so says the Śruti (Brahma Vid Brahmaiva bhavati). And to become Brahman means to obtain liberation; so declares Śaṅkarācārya in his commentary on the Brahma-sūtras (Brahma-bhāvaśca mokṣaḥ). This liberation is nothing but emancipation from the cycle of births and rebirths, the release from sorrow or pain.

6. The title Ātmānātma-viveka

For freedom from pain/sorrow there is necessary the discrimination between the Self and the not-self. The discrimination between the Self and the not-self is nothing but the knowledge of the distinction or difference between the two. The knowledge of the differece between the Self and the not-self means the knowledge that the Self is of the nature of existence-sentience-bliss and that the not-self (universe, world) appearing on it is false and non-eternal. This is the meaning of the title Ātmānātma-viveka.

7. The Subject-matter of Ātmānātma-viveka

Like Sadānanda's Vedānta-sāra, this work Ātmānātma-viveka of Śankarācārya is a short treatise briefly exposing the Absolure Monism of Śaṅkarācārya. Hence it contains subjects like the fourfold requisites for the inquiry, six criteria to fix the purport of the Upaniṣads, the threefold bodies namely the causal, the subtle and the gross, fivefold combination (Pañcīkaraṇa), three states like the waking etc, five sheaths of the Self, the nature of the not-self and of the Self, the Nescience (avidyā, ajnāna), and so on.

8. Nature of the work Ātmānātma-viveka

This small tract Ātmānātma-viveka is mainly in prose with verses occuring occasionally. It is wirtten in the form of questions and answers. Hence we are to presume that in this work a pupil desirous of the knowledge of the Self etc. is putting questions and teacher is giving replies.

Moreover, in the case of the replies, the following points are noteworthy :- (1) Statements from Upaniṣds

are quoted, whenever necessary, in support of the assertions made in the text. 2) Sometimes our practical experience is cited to support the assertions. 3) Wherever necessary, logical reasoning is employed in order to substantiate the assertions, 4) Sometimes in order to support the assertions in the text traditionally current stanzas are quoted.

9. Division of the work into Sections

There are small and large sections made in the previously printed editions of the work Ātmānātma- viveka; they are 41 (forty one) in all. But these sections do not seem to be properly conceived; for therein a topic in the previous section is found continued in the next section. For example, in the printed editions, the example for the criterion [liṅga] ' Apūrvatā ' occuring in Section 13 has been given in the next 14th [fourteenth] section. Hence in this present work while giving the sections in the text, they are not given as in the editions printed in the past. But here have been made seventy eight [78] sections in consonance with the topic under discussion, and they have been numbered accordingly.

This new division of sections has led to two advantages:- I] First, the sections have become simple, in accordance with the topic under consideration. 2] Secondly, an easy comprehension of the matter occuring therein has been facilitated.

1) In case of a discriminating person, all the cognisable or sensible objects (in the universe) are not-self. The Self is the witness or seer (only). This discrimination or distincion between the Self and not-self has been stated in crores of books

Man resides in this world. He perceives the things in the world. That is, the things in the world are visible to him; they are the objects of his knowledge arising through sense-organs. That who is the seer or the withess of these things is the Self. According to the non-dual Vedānta of Śaṅkarācārya, the Self is eternal and is of the nature of existence, sentience and bliss.

Except the Self, whatever other things which become objects of cognition are all material, non-conscious and non-eternal, they are called not-self. The five great or gross elements like sky, air, etc, five sense-objects like sound, touch, etc, the bodies, the sense-organs, the inner organ, etc. are all not-self. But in our practical dealings, we usually take either the body or the sense-organs or the mind, etc. as the 'I' or the innermost Self. The reason for this misunderstanding is absence of the knowledge of difference between the Self and not-self. on the contrary, a discriminating man knows that the Self is a witness, while all things other than the Self are not-self and cognisable. This distinction between the two has been stated in many works on Vedānta philosophy, says Śaṅkarācārya.

2) Now (henceforth) the distinction between the Self and the not-self will be stated (by the author)

The Self (ātmā) is existence-consciousness-bliss. He is different from body, senses, etc. The body etc are not-self, they are non-sentient and non-eternal. There is a fundamental difference between the Self and not-self. Viveka means cognition of the distinction between two things. The Self becomes a witness/seer in view of its contact with the limiting adjuncts like body, etc., while the not-self is the visible/cognisable object or the seen factor. The seer and the seen never become identical. The author of the work is going to state the difference between the Self and not-self. The main distinction is :- the Self is the seer while the not-self is the seen.

Now, a question may be posed : what is the purpose of distinguishing the Self from the not-self ? The reply is : A man has to suffer sorrow in this world. But he has a desire that the pain should be removed and that he should get happiness. Now, the knowledge of the difference between the Self and the notself is useful in order to remove or destroy the cause of sorrow. Hence the author now discusses, in the next third section, the cause of grief.

3) Q - Due to what reason does the Self gain pain? Ans — (There is pain) on account of acceptance of a body (i. e. embodiment). And this is known from or is supported by a statement in the (Vedic) scripture namely "There is no casting off of pain and pleasure here (in this world) in case of an embodied person." (Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 8. 12. 1)

In this world, a man has to suffer threefold sorrow namely that coming from divinities, that coming from material elements and that from mind-body-complex (See Section 43). Really speaking, the seer or the innermost Self never suffers sorrows. The pain is felt by the mind. But in worldly dealings it is erroneously taken that the Self becomes happy or unhappy, as the idea of the Self is superimposed upon the mind.

Now, the reason for sorrow to the mind is this :- According to the theory of action (karma-vāda), man, in order to enjoy the good and bad fruits of actions, has to take repeated births. And as long as there is a body with organs, the pain and pleasure arising out of the contacts of the senses with the external objects cannot be avoided; and these contacts cannot be avoided so long as a man is living. As Bhagavadgitā puts it, the contacts of senses and sensual objects yield (the sensations of) cold and heat, pain aud pleasure. This means that the pain does not cease as long as the body is there. Thus embodiment alone is the cause of sorrow. This assertion is supported by Śaṅkarācārya with a quotation from Vedic scripture. Śruti stands for the Veda. The philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya is primarily based on Śruti or the Upanisads. Hence he often quotes from Śruti.

4) Q — What is the reason for embodiment (in case of the Self)? Ans — Due to actions

Action is a kind of material energy. This energy or action is generated through body, mind, and

speech. Action naturally produces its own result/consequence/fruit. And that fruit has to be enjoyed by the agent of that action. Now, there are certain actions whose fruit is immediately obtained in the present life. Some actions yield their fruits after a certain period. while there are other actions which do not produce their consequences even if the present life has come to an end. Now, in order to enjoy the fruits of such actions, a man has to take a birth again. Now to be born is to be embodied. And this cycle of action → birth (=embodiment) → action goes on constantly. It should be noted that these actions which are performed with a sense of attachment and egoism lead again and again to birth and rebirth.

5) If it be asked due to what reason is an action performed, The reply is (An action is performed) due to or under the influence of attachment, etc.

An embodied person performs actions. Those actions are incited by passions like attachment, anger, hatred, etc. To elucidate :- whenever a man feels desire or affection or attachment to any object in this world, he undertakes an action to procure that object. So also a person can entertain hatred for that thing which is not desired or not wanted ; then he undertakes an action in order to remove or destroy that unwanted thing. So also passions like wrath, envy, etc. lead a man to perform certain actions. To be brief, actions are undertaken or performed under the influence of passions like attachment, anger, hatred, envy, avarice, etc.

6) If it be asked whence do the passions like attachment and so on arise or spring ?, The reply is from Egoism.

The word ' abhimāna ' in the text means Egoism. To bear egoism means to think that the not self-things are really the Self and to adhere to them with the sense of ' I ' ' to me ', and ' my '. In our usual worldly dealings we say : Iam tall; Iam liberal; Iam snub-nosed; I want this

and I do not want that; this is my wife; my parents are kind; I have got two children; I own a farm and a house. Thus all our worldly dealings are founded on the sense of egoism. And due to this very egoism there arise passions like attachment, wrath, hatred etc. To explain :- Suppose, a man earns money for his own pleasure. Then he becomes greedy for (more) money. He becomes angry if his money is robbed by somebody or if his wife or children are harassed by somebody. He feels jealousy in case of that man who has more money than he. In this way, passions like attachment etc spring from the sense of egoism.

7) Q — But how (or whence) does the egoism spring?
Ans — Egoism arises from non-discrimination.

As observed under Section 6 above, the sense of egoism is related to objects other than the Self. Everything other than the Self is the non-sentient not-self. Really speaking, the real nature of ' I ' is the innermost Self. But as a man does not understand the difference between the Self and the not-Self, he begins to think the not-self to be the Self. Under Section 1 above, the distinction between the Self and the not-self has been pointed out; to know this distinction means discrimination, and the absence of this discrimination is non-discrimination (aviveka). This non-discrimination alone leads to the conviction or idea that the not-self is the Self, Thus, non-discrimination (aviveka) is the absence of the knowledge that the Self is different from the not-self. And this non-discrimination is the cause of egoism.

8) Q :- From what does the non-discrimination arise?
Ans :- (It arises) from Nescience.

The Nescience (ajnāna) from which springs up the non-discrimination is not ordinary ignorance (or absence of knowledge) pertaining to worldly or secular things. Nescience is a peculiar concept in the Monistic philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya. This Nescience is sometimes called

non-knowledge (or wrong knowledge) (avidyā) or sometimes is called Māyā. The concept of this Nescience is explained in the next Section 9.

If it be asked: Due to what cause does the Nescience spring ?, (then the reply is :) Not from anything. The wise people say the Nescience is beginningless, indescribable either as existent or as non-existent, made of three qualities opposed to knowledge, of positive nature, and something strange or miraculous. (Such Nescience can be proved) on the basis of (human) experience such as ' I am ignorant ', and so also on the basis of the scriptural statement namely " " (the sages came to know) God's own power which had been concealed by its own qualities " (Śvetāśvatara Upanisad, 1. 3) (9). (To be continued)

N. B. : The following abbreviations are used in the foregoing dialogue : Q : Query or Question.
Ans : Answer.

" Keep the truth of non-duality ever at heart ; never should you translate non-duality into action. O son, although non-duality with all the three worlds may be all right, it is not proper with the Preceptor ('Guru'-Teacher). Thus should you khow "

Supplement Verse 39.
By Shri Ramana Maharshi
'Philosophy of pure existence'

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